

THE Troublesome Raigne

of *Iohn* King of *England*, with the discouerie of *King* Richard Cordelions

Base sonne (vulgarly named, The Bastard Fawconbridge) · also the

death of *King Iohn* at Swinestead
Abbey

*As it was (sundry times) publikely acted by the
Queenes Maiesties Players, in the honourable Citie of
London.*



Imprinted at London for *Sampson Clarke*,
and are to be solde at his shop, on the backe-
side of the Royall Exchange.

1591

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THE NEW HUDSON
SHAKESPEARE

WS

KING JOHN

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
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PREFACE

The text of this edition of *King John* is based on a collation of the seventeenth century Folios, the Globe edition, the Cambridge (W. A. Wright) edition of 1891, and that of Delius (1882). As compared with the text of the earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare, it is conservative. Exclusive of changes in spelling, punctuation, and stage directions, very few emendations by eighteenth century and nineteenth century editors have been adopted; and these, with the more important variations from the First Folio, are indicated in the textual notes. These notes are printed immediately below the text, so that a reader or student may see at a glance the evidence in the case of a disputed reading, and have some definite understanding of the reasons for those differences in the text of Shakespeare which frequently surprise and very often annoy. Such an arrangement should be of special help in the case of plays so universally read and frequently acted, as actors and interpreters seldom agree in adhering to one text. A consideration of the more poetical, or the more dramatically effective, of two variant readings will often lead to rich results in awakening a spirit of discriminating interpretation and in developing true creative criticism. In no sense is this a textual variorum edition. The variants given are only those of importance and high authority.

The spelling and the punctuation of the text are modern, except in the case of verb terminations in *-ed*, which, when the *e* is silent, are printed with the apostrophe in its place. This is the general usage in the First Folio. The important contractions in the First Folio which may indicate Elizabethan pronunciation ('i' th'' for 'in the,' 'cank'red' for 'canker'd,' for example) are also followed. Modern spelling has to a certain extent been adopted in the text variants, but the original spelling has been retained wherever its peculiarities have been the basis for important textual criticism and emendation.

With the exception of the position of the textual variants, the plan of this edition is similar to that of the old Hudson Shakespeare. It is impossible to specify the various instances of revision and rearrangement in the matter of the Introduction and the interpretative notes, but the endeavor has been to retain all that gave the old edition its unique place and to add the results of what seems vital and permanent in later inquiry and research. In this edition, as in the volumes of the series already published, the chapters entitled Sources, Date of Composition, Early Editions, Versification and Diction, Duration of Action, Dramatic Construction and Development with Analysis by Act and Scene, Historical Connections with Genealogical Chart, and Stage History are wholly new. In this edition, too, is introduced a chronological chart, covering the important events of Shakespeare's life as man and as author, and indicating in parallel columns his relation to contemporary writers and events. As a guide to reading clubs and literary societies, there has been appended to the Introduction a table of the distribution of characters in the play, giving the acts and scenes in which each character appears and the number of lines spoken by each. The index

of words and phrases has been so arranged as to serve both as a glossary and as a guide to the more important grammatical differences between Elizabethan and modern English.

While it is important that the principle of *sum cuique* be attended to so far as is possible in matters of research and scholarship, it is becoming more and more difficult to give every man his own in Shakespearian annotation. The amount of material accumulated is so great that the identity-origin of much important comment and suggestion is either wholly lost or so crushed out of shape as to be beyond recognition. Instructive significance perhaps attaches to this in editing the works of one who quietly made so much of materials gathered by others. But the list of authorities given on page lvii will indicate the chief source of much that has gone to enrich the value of this edition. Especial acknowledgment is here made of the obligations to Dr. William Aldis Wright, whose work in the collation of Quartos, Folios, and the more important English and American editions of Shakespeare has been of so great value to all subsequent editors and investigators.

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INTRODUCTION

NOTE. In citations from Shakespeare's plays and nondramatic poems the numbering has reference to the Globe edition, except in the case of this play, where the reference is to this edition.

I. SOURCES

The serious Elizabethan drama began in patriotism and had a high political motive. The perils and difficulties of a nation rent asunder by bitterly opposing factions confronted Elizabeth at the beginning of her reign, and when Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton wrote *Gorboduc*, their main object was to warn the English people of the danger in a kingdom divided against itself and to show the maiden queen the perils involved in uncertainty as to legitimate succession to a throne. With that steady growth of national spirit which characterized the reign of Elizabeth, developed the taste for chronicle plays dealing with the history of the nation in its formative period. The national drama grew up with the increasing pride of nation. In the defeat of the Armada this pride of nation reached full tide, and the enthusiasm found immortal expression in Shakespeare's ten history plays.

The reign of King John had a peculiar attraction for Elizabethan dramatists, for it was fruitful of events affecting the claims and usages of the mediæval Church. This aptness of the matter caused it to be early and largely used in furthering the great ecclesiastical revolution of the sixteenth century. Some of the leading events of the reign — John's

disputes with the pope, the sufferings of his kingdom under the interdict, the surrender of his crown to the legate, and his reputed death by poison — were used, or abused, in a way to suit the time and purpose of the writer, by John Bale, a Protestant bishop, in a peculiar fusion of Moral and Historical play called *Kynge Johan*, which was probably written in the time of Edward VI. The design of this singular performance was to promote the Reformation, of which Bale was a strenuous and unscrupulous supporter. The historical characters are the king himself, Pope Innocent the Third, Pandulf, Langton, Simon of Swinsett (Swinstead), and a monk called Raymundus. Mingled with these are various allegorical personages, — England, who is said to be a widow, Imperial Majesty, Nobility, Clergy, Civil Order, Treason, Dissimulation, Verity, and Sedition, the latter serving as the Jester of the piece. Thus we have the common material of the old Moral plays rudely combined with some elements of the Historical drama such as grew into use on the public stage forty or fifty years later. *Kynge Johan*, though written by a bishop, teems with the lowest ribaldry and vituperation, and is barren of anything that can pretend to the name of poetry or wit. It is improbable that Shakespeare knew of this old play at first hand. There is no trace of its having been acted in Elizabeth's reign, and it remained in manuscript until the nineteenth century.¹

1. *The Troublesome Raigne of John, King of England*. The true literary source of Shakespeare's *King John* is a play of unknown authorship, usually called *The Troublesome Raigne*, first printed in 1591 with the title-page which is reproduced in facsimile on page ii. *The Troublesome Raigne* was printed

¹ *Kynge Johan* was printed for the first time by the Camden Society in 1838.

again in 1611 with the following title-page: THE | First and second Part of | the troublesome Raigne of | *John King* of England. | *With the discoverie of King Richard Cor-delions* Base sonne (vulgarly named, the Bastard | Fawconbridge :) Also, the death of King *John* | at Swinstead Abbey. | *As they were (sundry times) lately acted by | the Queenes Maiesties Players.* | Written by W. Sh. | [printer's ornament] | Imprinted at London by *Valentine Simmes* for *John Helme*, | and are to be sold at his Shop in Saint Dunstons | Church-yard in Fleete Street. | 1611. | The interesting fact brought out by these two title-pages is the anonymous character of the first edition and the strange claim made for the second by the words "written by W. Sh." A later edition (1622) boldly claims the play to be the work of William Shakespeare, the title-page reading as follows: THE | First and second Part of | the troublesome Raigne of | IOHN King of England. | *With the discoverie of King Richard Cor-delions* Base sonne (vulgarly named, the Bastard | *Fauconbridge* :) Also the death of King | *John* at Swinstead Abbey. | *As they were (sundry times) lately acted.* | Written by W. SHAKESPEARE. | [Printer's Device] | LONDON, | Printed by *Aug: Mathewes* for *Thomas Dewe*, and are to | be sold at his shop in St. Dunstones Church-yard in Fleet-street, 1622. |

The attempt to palm off *The Troublesome Raigne* as Shakespeare's *King John*, of which no Quarto had appeared, seems now an obvious commercial trick, but some critics have upheld the Shakespearian authorship. Tieck declared not only that every line showed the master's hand, but that on the whole *The Troublesome Raigne* as a drama was superior to *King John*; and Coleridge pronounced it "not [Shakespeare's] but of him." Modern critics, with few

exceptions,¹ are agreed that Shakespeare could have had no part in the writing of the older play.²

This Source-Quarto bears strong internal marks of having been written when the enthusiasm of the nation was wrought up to an intense pitch over the Spanish Armada, and when Elizabeth and the papacy were actively hostile toward each other. Abounding in spoken and acted satire and invective, the play must have appealed strongly to that national feeling which issued in the Reformation, and which was strengthened afterwards by the means used to put the Reformation down. But, as the Cambridge editors point out, the author of the Source-Quarto "not only disregarded chronology, but invented, altered, or ignored the facts with the greatest freedom. Like Bale, though to a less degree, he gave his work an anti-papal bias. He invented the part played by the Bastard Faulconbridge; he combined in one person the Archduke of Austria, who had imprisoned Richard I and was dead at the time of the play, with the Viscount of Limoges, before whose castle Cœur-de-lion had received his mortal wound; he made Arthur younger than he was, and kept Constance a widow, for purposes of dramatic effectiveness; and he omitted all mention of Magna Charta, and with it of the constitutional element in the quarrel between John and his barons. Such are only a few of the violations of historical accuracy which mark almost every scene."

It is noteworthy that the spirit of religious controversy, which makes itself felt in both of the older pieces, finds no

¹ Professor W. J. Courthope gives the authorship to Shakespeare.

² The reference on the title-pages of *The Troublesome Raigne* to "the Queenes Maiesties Players" led Fleay to believe the play may have been the joint composition of Greene, Lodge, and Peele—the only dramatists known to have been connected with this company.

place in Shakespeare's play. Shakespeare does not depict a Protestant spirit—only the natural feelings of a sound, honest English patriotism, resolute to withstand alike all foreign encroachments, whether from kings or emperors or popes. In justice to *The Troublesome Raigne* it should be pointed out that the patriotic tone of Shakespeare's play is hardly less strong than that of his original, as is illustrated by the closing passage, quoted below, which has been almost literally followed by Shakespeare:

Thus England's peace begins in Henry's reign,
And bloody wars are closed with happy league.
Let England live but true within itself,
And all the world can never wrong her state.
Lewis, thou shalt be bravely shipt to France
For never Frenchman got of English ground
The twentieth part that thou hast conquered.

· · · · ·
If England's peers and people join in one,
Nor Pope, nor France, nor Spain, can do them wrong.

2. *Holinshed's Chronicles*. In all his plays dealing with English history, Shakespeare either directly or indirectly derived the great body of his material from the *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, of Raphael Holinshed (Holynshed, Hollynshed, Hollingshead, etc.), first published in two folio volumes in 1577. A second edition appeared in 1586–1587, "newlie augmented and continued."¹ In most of the historical plays, Shakespeare's deviations from Holinshed have been chiefly in the interests of dramatic economy and artistic effectiveness, but in *King John* Holinshed has been

¹ In W. G. Boswell-Stone's *Shakspeare's Holinshed* are given all the portions of the *Chronicles* which are of special interest to the Shakespeare student.

followed both in general plan and in details only so far as the unknown author of *The Troublesome Raigne* follows it.

3. *Other Sources.* Proof that Shakespeare made use of any source other than *The Troublesome Raigne* is lacking. Painstaking comparison of the various texts seems, however, to indicate the possibility of Shakespeare's having gone for minor details to such works as Stow's *Annals*¹ (1580). Moore Smith points out that the scene of the poisoning of John, while correctly given by Holinshed as "Swineshead," appears as "Swinstead" in both Stow's *Annals* and Rastell's *Chronicle*.² A large number of such instances might be regarded as constituting evidence, but little importance can attach to a few cases of this kind.

II. DATE OF COMPOSITION

The date of composition of *King John* falls within 1598, the later time limit (*terminus ante quem*), and 1591, the earlier time limit (*terminus post quem*). The weight of evidence is in favor of 1593-1594.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. *Negative.* *King John*, like *The Taming of the Shrew*, is missing from the list of plays given in *The Stationers'*

¹ *Annales, or a Generale Chronicle of England from Brute until the present yeare of Christ 1580.* John Stow (Stowe) was one of the earliest and most diligent collectors of English antiquities. In addition to the preparation of several volumes of which the *Annals* was one, he assisted in the continuation of Holinshed's *Chronicles*.

² *The Pastyme of People; The Chronycles of dyuers Realmys and most specyally of the Realme of Englonde* (1529). Of this work by John Rastell (Rastall), printer and author, the British Museum copy is the only perfect copy known.

Registers. Since all the other plays of Shakespeare have been discovered among the entries, this exception is of especial interest.

2. *Positive*. Francis Meres, however, mentions *King John* in the *Palladis Tamia, Wits Treasury; being the Second Part of Wits Commonwealth*, published in 1598, in which he gives a list of twelve noteworthy Shakespeare plays in existence at that time. He expressly refers to "*Richard the 2, Richard the 3, Henry the 4, King Iohn*." This clearly establishes 1598 as the later time limit, although between this date and the publication of the First Folio, in 1623, no references to this play have come to light.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. *Allusions within the Play*. Several allusions within the play are held by critics to throw light on the question of date of composition. The lines

Have sold their fortunes at their native homes,
Bearing their birthrights proudly on their backs.

[II, i, 69-70]

were believed by Malone to refer to the sailing in 1596 of the grand fleet against Spain, for, as he points out, "Many of our old historians speak of the splendour and magnificence displayed by the noble and gallant adventurers who served in this expedition; and Ben Jonson has particularly alluded to it in his *Silent Woman*, written a few years afterwards." But this passage, like the lament of Constance (III, iv), which is held to reflect the grief of Shakespeare at the death of his son Hamnet in 1596, cannot be regarded as contributing trustworthy support for so late a date.

Marshall¹ refers to a passage in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* or *The Second Part of Ieronimo*, licensed in 1592, which seems to have reference to what has been partly reproduced in the speech of the Bastard (II, i, 137-138):

You are the hare of whom the proverb goes,
Whose valour plucks dead lions by the beard.

In the tragedy here referred to, the passage runs :

He hunted well, that was a lion's death ;
Not he that in a garment wore his skin :
So hares may pull dead lions by the beard.

The close resemblance here found can scarcely be regarded as accidental.

2. *Style and Diction.* The diction of *King John*, the quality of the blank verse, the use of rhyme, the absence of prose, the predominance of epic interest over dramatic, the complete freedom from the influence of Marlowe, the introduction of the comic element, and the general spirit of the play, all help to prove the contention that the date of composition falls within the same general period of time (1593-1594) to which *King Richard the Second* belongs. It cannot be said with certainty which of the two plays is the earlier, but in spite of its close adherence to its 'source,' *King John* bears many evidences of a somewhat less mature workmanship than *King Richard the Second*. The evidence for the priority of *King John* is greatly strengthened by the quality of the characterization, which is everywhere less natural and less inevitable than that of *King Richard the Second*.

¹ F. A. Marshall, in his Introduction to *King John* in the Henry Irving Shakespeare.

III. EARLY EDITIONS

FOLIOS

King John was first printed, so far as is known, in the collected edition of Shakespeare's dramas published in 1623. This is the famous First Folio, designated in the textual notes of this edition as F_1 , and is the most important single volume in the history of the texts of Shakespeare. *King John* occupies pages 1 to 22, inclusive, in the division of the book devoted to 'Histories,' the plays of which are arranged in chronological sequence from *The life and death of King John*, as it is called in the running title, to *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth*. It is the only authentic play of Shakespeare that is not named in *The Stationers' Registers*. Even Blount and Jaggard fail to mention it in the long list of plays among "soe manie of the said copies as are not formerly ent'red to other men," given in the *Registers* under date of November 8, 1623, when these publishers were preparing to issue their collective edition of the poet's works.

The Second Folio, F_2 (1632), the Third Folio, F_3 (1663, 1664), and the Fourth Folio, F_4 (1685), show few variants in the text of *King John*, and none of importance.

ROWE'S EDITIONS

The first critical editor of Shakespeare's plays was Nicholas Rowe, poet laureate to George I. His first edition was issued in 1709 in six octavo volumes. In this edition Rowe, an experienced playwright, marked the entrances and exits of the characters and introduced many stage directions. He also

introduced the list of *dramatis personæ* which has been made the basis for all later lists. A second edition in eight volumes was published in 1714. Rowe followed very closely the text of the Fourth Folio, but modernized spelling, punctuation, and occasionally grammar.

IV. VERSIFICATION AND DICTION

BLANK VERSE

King John is written wholly in verse and for the most part in blank verse¹—the unrhymed iambic five-stress (decasyllabic) verse, or iambic pentameter, introduced into England from Italy by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, about 1540, and used by him in a translation of the second and fourth books of Vergil's *Æneid*. Nicholas Grimald (*Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557) employed the measure for the first time in English original poetry, and its roots began to strike deep into British soil and absorb substance. It is peculiarly significant that Sackville and Norton should have used it as the measure of *Gorboduc*, the first English tragedy (performed by "the Gentlemen of the Inner Temple" on January 18, 1561, and first printed in 1565). About the time when Shakespeare arrived in London the infinite possibilities of blank verse as a vehicle for dramatic poetry and passion were being shown by Kyd, and above all by Marlowe. Blank verse as used by Shakespeare is really an epitome of the

¹ The term 'blank verse' was just coming into use in Shakespeare's day. It seems to have been used for the first time in literature in Nash's Preface to Greene's *Menaphon*, where we find the expression, "the swelling bumbast of bragging blanke verse." Shakespeare uses the expression three times, always humorously or satirically (see *Much Ado About Nothing*, V, ii, 32).

development of the measure in connection with the English drama. In his earlier plays the blank verse is often similar to that of *Gorboduc*. The tendency is to adhere to the syllable-counting principle, to make the line the unit, the sentence and phrase coinciding with the line (end-stopped verse), and to use five perfect iambic feet to the line. In plays of the middle period, such as *The Merchant of Venice* and *As You Like It*, written between 1596 and 1600, the blank verse is more like that of Kyd and Marlowe, with less monotonous regularity in the structure and an increasing tendency to carry on the sense from one line to another with a syntactical or rhetorical pause at the end of the line (run-on verse, *enjambement*). Redundant syllables now abound, and the melody is richer and fuller. In Shakespeare's later plays the blank verse breaks away from bondage to formal line limits, and sweeps all with it in freedom, power, and organic unity.

The verse of *King John* is more monotonously regular than that of the later plays; it is less flexible and varied, less musical and sonorous, and it lacks the superb movement of the verse in *Othello*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. End-stopped, normally regular iambic pentameter lines are abundant. Short lines are repeatedly used for interrupted and exclamatory remarks, as in I, i, 47; IV, i, 71; V, vi, 3. There are no weak endings and only seven light endings,¹ the play in this respect resembling the earlier plays.

¹ Light endings, as defined by Ingram, are such words as *am, can, do, has, I, thou*, etc., on which "the voice can to a certain small extent dwell"; weak endings are words like *and, for, from, if, in, of, or*, which "are so essentially proclitic . . . that we are forced to run them, in pronunciation no less than in sense, into the closest connection with the opening words of the succeeding line."

ALEXANDRINES

While French prosodists apply the term 'Alexandrine' only to a twelve-syllable line, with the pause after the sixth syllable, it is generally used in English to designate iambic six-stress verse, or iambic hexameter, of which we have examples in II, i, 177, and III, iii, 71. This was a favorite Elizabethan measure, and it was common in Moral plays and the earlier heroic drama. English literature has no finer examples of this verse than the last line of each stanza of *The Faerie Queene*.

RHYME

In the history of the English drama, rhyme as a vehicle of expression precedes blank verse and prose. Miracle plays, Moral plays, and interludes are all in rhyming measures. In Shakespeare may be seen the same development. A progress from more to less rhyme is a sure index to his growth as a dramatist and a master of expression. In the early *Love's Labour's Lost* are more than 500 rhyming five-stress iambic couplets; in *Much Ado About Nothing* are only 20; in the very late *The Winter's Tale* there is not one.¹

1. *Couplets*. In *King John* are about 150 lines of rhymed pentameter verse and most of these are 'rhyme-tags' at the end either of scenes, where their use is merely mechanical, or of speeches, where the couplet often has the effect of a clinching epigram.

2. *A Popular Saying*. Proverbs and bits of popular wisdom are naturally either in rhyme or in alliterative rhythm, as in II, i, 145-146.

¹ The Chorus speech introducing Act IV is excepted as not part of the regular dialogue.

3. *Alternate Rhymes*. Alternate rhymes in five-stress verse are found only in Shakespeare's plays written before 1600. They are common in *Romeo and Juliet* and occur occasionally in *King John*. Combinations of such rhymes will be found in perfect harmony with the spirit of the play, as in the quatrain which closes the first act, and in the six-line stanza, II, i, 504-509, which is the sextet (rhyming *a b a b c c*) of *Venus and Adonis*.¹

PROSE

Of recent years there have been interesting discussions of the question "whether we are justified in supposing that Shakespeare was guided by any fixed principle in his employment of verse and prose, or whether he merely employed them, as fancy suggested, for the sake of variety and relief."² It is a significant fact that in both *King Richard the Second* and *King John* there is no prose, and in many of the other early plays there is very little, the proportion of prose to blank verse increasing with the decrease of rhyme.

V. DURATION OF ACTION

1. *Historic Time*. A period of seventeen years is covered by the events of the play. In April, 1199, upon the death of Richard I, John is recognized as Richard's successor in

¹ Lodge's *Scillas Metamorphosis*, 1589, from which Shakespeare plainly drew inspiration for *Venus and Adonis*, is written in this verse.

² Professor J. Churton Collins, *Shakespeare as a Prose Writer*. See Delius, *Die Prosa in Shakespeares Dramen* (*Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, V, 227-273); Janssen, *Die Prosa in Shakespeares Dramen*; Professor Hiram Corson, *An Introduction to the Study of Shakespeare*, pages 83-98.

Normandy, England, Poitou, and Aquitaine, while John's nephew Prince Arthur is acknowledged by Anjou, Touraine, and Maine. From this year until the death of John, October 19, 1216, the dates which are specially significant in Shakespeare's play are — 1200, the end of war between John and Philip of France; 1202, the renewal of war which ends in the capture of Arthur and his imprisonment at Rouen; 1204, the fall of Château Gaillard; 1207, John's refusal to accept Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury; 1208, the pope's interdict against England; 1209, the excommunication of John; 1213, the bending of John to the will of the pope; 1215, the signing of Magna Charta; 1216, Louis of France urged to depose John.

2. *Dramatic Time.* "The historical drama," says Bulwer Lytton, "is the concentration of historical events." In Shakespeare's drama the events of seventeen years are represented as the occurrences of seven days, with intervals comprising in all not more than three or four months. P. A. Daniel's time analysis¹ is as follows:

Day 1. — I, i.

Interval (return of the French ambassador and arrival of John in France).

Day 2. — II, i; III, i-iii.

Interval.

Day 3. — III, iv.

Interval. (During this interval the deaths of Constance and Elinor must occur.)

Day 4. — IV, i-iii.

Interval.

¹ *New Shakspeare Society Transactions, 1877-1879*, pp. 257-264.

Day 5. — V, i.

Interval (including at least Pandulph's return journey to the Dauphin, the Bastard's preparation for defense, and his and King John's journey, with their army, to Edmundsbury).

Day 6. — V, ii-v.

Day 7. — V, vi, vii.

VI. DRAMATIC CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

In the right and full sense of the term, Shakespeare's history plays are dramatic revivifications of the past, wherein the shades of departed things are made to live their life over again under our eye, so that they have an interest for us such as no mere narrative of events can possess. The further we push our historical researches, the more we are brought to recognize the substantial justness of Shakespeare's representations. Even when he makes free with chronology, it is commonly in quest of something higher and better than chronological accuracy. The result is in most cases favorable to right conceptions; the persons and events being thereby so knit together in a sort of vital harmony as to be better understood than if they were ordered with literal exactness of time and place. Kings and princes and the heads of the state figure prominently in his scenes, but in such a way as to set us face to face with the real spirit and sense of the people, whose claims are never sacrificed to make an imposing pageant or puppet-show of political automatons. If Shakespeare brings in fictitious persons and events, it is to set forth those aspects of life which lie without the range of common history.

The noteworthy point is that out of the materials of an entire age and nation, Shakespeare can so select and use a few as to give a just conception of the whole; all the lines and features of its life and action, its piety, chivalry, wisdom, policy, wit, and profligacy, being gathered up and wrought out in fair proportion and clear expression. Where he deviates most from all the authorities known to have been consulted by him, there is a large, wise propriety in his deviations. Indeed, some of those deviations have been remarkably verified by the researches of later times, as if Shakespeare had exercised a sort of prophetic power in his dramatic retrospections.

Shakespeare, in giving us what lies within the scope of his art, facilitates and furthers the understanding of that which is beyond it. This makes the historical drama what it should be—a "concentration of history," setting our thoughts at the point where the several lines of truth converge, whence we may survey the field of his subject both in its unity and in its variety.

Especially noteworthy in Shakespeare's handling of historical material is his calmness and poise of judgment. In the bitter conflicts of factions and principles he allows the several persons to utter, in the extremest forms, their opposing views without committing himself to any of them or betraying any disapproval of them. He holds the balance even between justice to the men and justice to the truth. The claims of legitimacy and of revolution, of divine right,¹

¹ Schlegel characterizes Shakespeare's "dramas derived from the English history" thus: "This mirror of kings should be the manual of princes: from it they may learn the intrinsic dignity of their hereditary vocation; but they will also learn the difficulties of their

personal merit, and public choice, the doctrines of the monarchical, the aristocratic, the popular origin of the state—all these are by turns urged in their most rational or most plausible aspects, but merely in the order and on the footing of dramatic propriety.

At no time does Shakespeare play or affect to play the part of umpire between the wranglers: which of them has the truth, or the better cause—this he leaves to appear silently in the ultimate sum-total of results. And so imperturbable is his fairness, so unswerving his impartiality, as almost to seem the offspring of a heartless and cynical indifference. Hence a French writer, Chasles, sets him down as "chiefly remarkable for a judgment so high, so firm, so uncompromising, that one is well-nigh tempted to impeach his coldness, and to find in this impassible observer something that may almost be called cruel towards the human race. In the historical pieces," he continues, "the picturesque, rapid, and vehement genius which produced them seems to bow before the higher law of a judgment almost ironical in its clear-sightedness. Sensibility to impressions, the ardent force of imagination, the eloquence of passion—these brilliant gifts of nature which would seem destined to draw a poet beyond all limits, are subordinated in that extraordinary intelligence to a calm and almost deriding sagacity, that pardons nothing and forgets nothing."

Both tragedy and comedy deal with a conflict between an individual force (which may be centered either in one character

situation, the dangers of usurpation, the inevitable fall of tyranny, which buries itself under its attempts to obtain a firmer foundation; lastly, the ruinous consequences of the weaknesses, errors, and crimes of kings, for whole nations, and many subsequent generations."

or in a group of characters acting as one) and environing circumstances. In tragedy the individual (one person or a group) is overwhelmed; in comedy the individual triumphs. In both tragedy and comedy five stages may be noted in the plot development: (1) the exposition, or introduction; (2) the complication, rising action, or growth; (3) the climax, crisis, or turning point; (4) the resolution, falling action, or consequence; and (5) the dénouement, catastrophe,¹ or conclusion. Let it not be thought for a moment that each of these stages is clearly differentiated. As a rule they pass insensibly into each other, as they do in life.

ANALYSIS BY ACT AND SCENE²

I. THE EXPOSITION, OR INTRODUCTION (TYING OF THE KNOT)

Act I, Scene i. Without preface or prologue the action is begun by the claim of Philip of France to the dominions of King John. This claim is in behalf of Arthur, against whom John is accused by Philip's messenger of plotting. In the word "usurpingly" (line 13) and in John's reply "Here have we war for war, and blood for blood" (line 19) the keynote of the chief struggle is struck. The conflict both of conscience with ambition and of nation with nation is in these words begun. With line 44 a quick transition is made to introduce in lively fashion the Bastard, who typifies English patriotism, courage, and keen wit, and who is to become the hero of the play. In this scene most of the chief actors of the drama are introduced.

¹ "*Catastrophe*—the change or revolution which produces the conclusion or final event of a dramatic piece."—Johnson.

² "It must be understood that a play can be analyzed into very different schemes of plot. It must not be thought that one of these schemes is right and the rest wrong; but the schemes will be better or worse in proportion as—while of course representing correctly the facts of the play—they bring out more or less of what ministers to our sense of design."—Moulton.

II. THE COMPLICATION, RISING ACTION, OR GROWTH (TYING OF THE KNOT)

Act II, Scene i. The dramatic complication becomes marked when the scene shifts to France, and the main action is rapidly advanced when, before Angiers, the conflicting claims to the English throne are shamefully settled for the moment, not by combat, but by the bartering of John's niece Blanch in marriage to Philip's son Lewis, with a dowry consisting of the French provinces and a sum of money. This action affords the opportunity to reintroduce the spirit of right and honour in the person of the Bastard, who, in the soliloquy which closes the scene, resolves with waggish jest:

Since kings break faith upon commodity,
Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee.

The scene also serves to reveal the strong part that Constance is to take in the intrigue that is already developing. Both in the schemings of the Queen mother, who shows that the political ambitions of John are not greater than her own for him, and in the vehement wrath of Constance toward those who have betrayed Arthur's cause, the complication is forwarded. The action throughout is rapid and uninterrupted.

Act III, Scene i. As is characteristic of the whole play, this act is opened without the aid of any of the usual dramatic devices for delaying the complication. The center of the stage is still in France. By contrasting the positive Constance with the negative Blanch and the timid Arthur, Shakespeare has thus early accomplished his purpose so far as the part that Constance plays in the tangle of events is concerned. Succeeding events only serve to emphasize what is clearly shown here.

In the introduction of the pope's legate, Pandulph, the curious cross-action of the play is begun. From this point John acts the double rôle of hero, as champion of England against the pope, and of villain, as the persecutor of an innocent boy. The keynote of "usurper" and "war for war, and blood for blood," struck in the first scene (lines 13 and 19), is again heard above the sound of many voices. John is excommunicated, Philip withdraws his friendship, and war is again begun.

Act III, Scene ii. The ten lines of this scene intensify the complication by revealing the death of Austria at the hand of the Bastard, and the capture of Arthur, who is a prisoner at the mercy of John.

Act III, Scene iii. To show that an actual conflict rages, seems to be the main purpose of this comparatively brief scene, but it is also made to reveal the full depth of the villainy of John, and the full force of the intrigue. The crisis is anticipated in the brief bits of dialogue (lines 65-66) which pass sentence of death on Arthur. The childish wail, "O, this will make my mother die with grief!" (line 5), foreshadows the death of Constance in the fourth act and in some measure anticipates the questionings of the audience as to the disappearance from the stage of its most forceful dramatis persona.

Act III, Scene iv. All the dramatic interest of the scene centers in the answer to the cry of Arthur just referred to. The grief of Constance suggests the furor of madness or despair. The main action is advanced in the general disconsolateness of the French combatants, and the cross-action is strengthened by the optimism of the pope's representative, Pandulph, who sees in the thickening complication the success of the cause which he represents.

Act IV, Scene i. This is one of the great emotional scenes in Shakespeare. The dialogue between Arthur and Hubert rouses the audience to an intensity of feeling which gives peculiar dramatic interest to the closing scene of the complication.

III. THE CLIMAX, CRISIS, OR TURNING POINT (THE KNOT TIED)

Act IV, Scene ii, 1-248. The complication is at its height and the climax is reached. When John, who has been led to believe that Arthur's death is a reality, is confronted with the demand of the nobles that his nephew be given up to them, and with the news not only that his mother is dead and the Dauphin has landed an army in England, but that there is widespread popular unrest, the turning point has been reached.

IV. THE RESOLUTION, FALLING ACTION, OR CONSEQUENCE (THE UNTYING OF THE KNOT)

Act IV, Scene ii, 249-269. When John learns from Hubert that Arthur still lives, the falling action of the drama begins.

Act IV, Scene iii. With almost unprecedented speed the complication now moves rapidly toward the catastrophe. The defection of the nobles is complete—they believe in the guilt of both John and Hubert and hasten to join the Dauphin. The Bastard sees only woes to come.

Act V, Scene i. By going through the form of yielding his crown to Pandulph and receiving it again from him, John hopes to stay the inevitable. But the news that Arthur's death is a reality causes him again to waver in his purpose. The Bastard, though indignant at the compromise made with the pope, still shows readiness to fight in behalf of the king. As the star of John wanes, that of the Bastard is in the ascendant.

Act V, Scene ii. Pandulph vainly attempts to turn the Dauphin from his purpose to war on John, but the arrival of the Bastard to proclaim John's readiness to fight shows the weakening of the cross-action.

Act V, Scene iii. John, ill and discouraged, leaves the field, while his nobles, informed of contemplated treachery by the French, determine to return to their natural allegiance, thus hastening the solution of the complication.

V. DÉNOUEMENT, CATASTROPHE, OR CONCLUSION (THE KNOT UNTIED)

Act V, Scenes vi–vii. In the death of John by poisoning, Shakespeare has created a catastrophe which is also the means of linking the action of *King John* with that of the great Shakespearian drama of English history. Prince Henry, unopposed, succeeds to the throne, and England is saved from foes within and foes without.

VII. HISTORICAL CONNECTIONS

Henry II, the first of the Plantagenet kings, had four sons, Henry, Richard, Geoffrey, and John. Eleanor,¹ his queen, was first married to Louis VII of France, and some sixteen years after the marriage was divorced on suspicion of

¹ 'Elinor' is the form found everywhere in the text of the play.

conjugal infidelity. Within six weeks after the divorce, she was married to Henry, then Earl of Anjou, who was much younger than she. Through her, Henry acquired large possessions, but not enough to offset the trouble she caused in his family and kingdom. Unfaithful to her first husband, and jealous of the second, she instigated his sons to rebellion against him. In 1189, after a reign of thirty-five years, Henry died, invoking the vengeance of heaven on the ingratitude of his children, and was succeeded by Richard, Henry and Geoffrey having died before him. Geoffrey, Duke of Bretagne in right of Constance his wife, left one son, Arthur. In 1190, when Arthur was a mere child, Richard contracted him in marriage with the daughter of Tancred, king of Sicily, at the same time owning him as "our most dear nephew, and heir, if by chance we should die without issue." At Richard's death in 1199, however, John produced a testament of his brother's, giving him the crown. Anjou, Touraine, and Maine were the proper patrimony of the Plantagenets, and therefore devolved to Arthur as the acknowledged representative of that House, the rule of lineal succession being there fully established. To the ducal chair of Bretagne Arthur was the proper heir in right of his mother, who was then Duchess-regnant of that province. John claimed the dukedom of Normandy as the proper inheritance from his ancestor, William the Conqueror, and his claim was there admitted. Poitou, Guienne, and five other French provinces were the inheritance of his mother Eleanor; but she made over her title to him, and there also his claim was recognized. The English crown he claimed in virtue of his brother's will, but took care to strengthen that claim by a parliamentary election. In the strict order of inheritance,

all these possessions should fall to Arthur; but that order, it appears, was not then fully established, except in the provinces belonging to the House of Anjou.

As Duke of Bretagne, Arthur was a vassal of France, and therefore bound to homage as the condition of his title. Constance, feeling his need of a protector, arranged with Philip Augustus, king of France, that he should do homage also for the other provinces, where his right was clogged with no such conditions. Philip accordingly met him at Mans, received his oath, gave him knighthood, and took him to Paris.

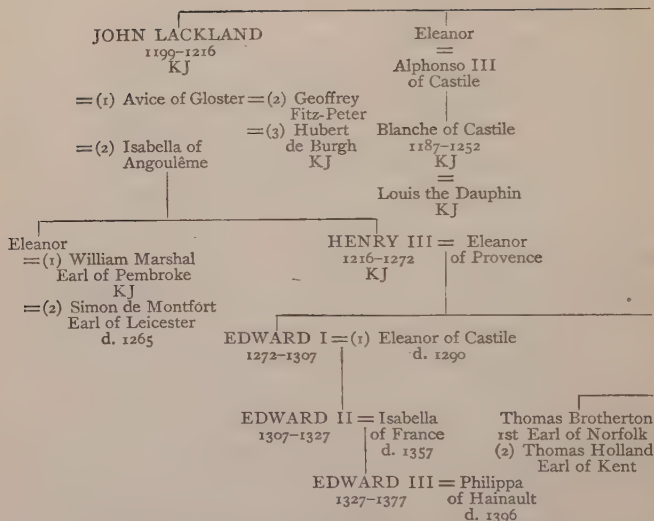
Philip was cunning, ambitious, and unscrupulous, and his plan was to drive his own interests in Arthur's name. With Arthur entirely in his power, he could use him as an ally or a prisoner, whichever would best serve his turn; and in effect "Arthur was a puppet in his hands, to be set up or knocked down, as he desired to bully or cajole John out of the territories he claimed in France." In the year 1200, Philip was at war with John in pretended maintenance of Arthur's rights; but before the close of that year the war ended in a peace, by the terms of which John was to give his niece, Blanche of Castile, in marriage to Louis the Dauphin, with a dowry of several valuable fiefs; and Arthur was to hold even his own Bretagne as a vassal of John.

The genealogical tables given on the following pages indicate the inter-relation of the more important historical characters, English and French, in *King John*, and show in what other plays of Shakespeare they, their ancestors, or their descendant are mentioned or appear as dramatis personæ. (See page xxxvi for the key.)

HISTORICAL

I.

HENRY II¹
1154-1189



¹ "Henry and the seven rulers who followed and were descended from him, reigning in all for nearly two hundred and fifty years, are known as the Angevin line of kings, the word Angevin being taken from Anjou in France, Henry's birthplace and paternal inheritance. They are also spoken of as the Plantagenet family; Henry's father, Geoffrey of Anjou, having been given the nickname Geoffrey *plante de genêt*, from the broom flower (*planta genista*), either because he wore a sprig of that plant for a badge or because he was so fond of hunting and riding over the broom-covered heaths." — Edward P. Cheyney.

CONNECTIONS

ENGLISH

= ELEANOR¹ OF AQUITAINE

d. 1203

KJ

Geoffrey
Duke of Brittany²

d. 1186

KJ

Constance
of Brittany²

d. 1201

=
(2) Ralph
of Chester

RICHARD I

1189-1199

KJ

Philip the Bastard

d. 1226

KJ

Eleanora
Damsel of Brittany²

d. 1241

KJ

Arthur
Duke of Brittany²

m. at Rouen

KJ

Marie

= (2) Margaret
of France

d. 1317

Edmund Crouchback
Earl of Lancaster

Edmund
Earl of Kent

= Joan of Kent

= (1) William Montague

Thomas II

John
Duke of Eyster

(St.) Thomas
Earl of Lancaster

Henry
Earl of Lancaster

Henry
Duke of Lancaster

Blanche

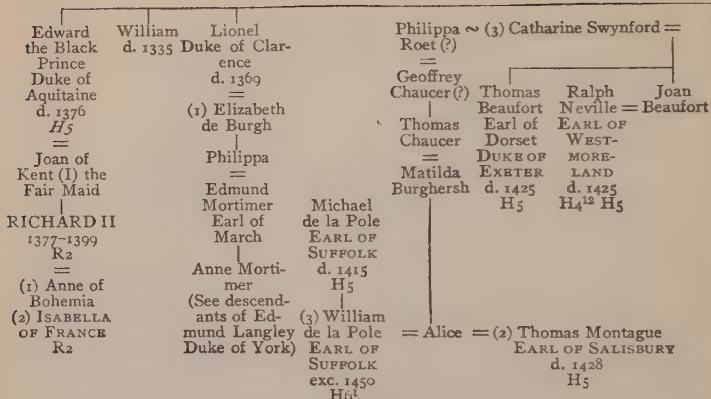
=
John of Gaunt

R2

¹ The usual spelling of the name in the Folios is 'Elinor' or 'Elleanor.' Through his marriage with Eleanor Henry came into possession of her magnificent heritage of Poitou, Guienne, and Gascony. Having inherited Normandy and Maine as well as England from his mother, and claiming the sovereignty of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, he ruled over a vast realm extending from the Orkneys to the Pyrenees.

² In the text of the play and elsewhere in this Introduction the French form *Bretagne* is used.

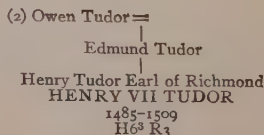
Edward III
1327-1377
H₅



SIGNS AND ABBREVIATIONS IN THE TABLES

- | = direct descent from
 == married to
 ~ = brother or sister
 ~ = brother or sister of the half blood
 d. = died
 exc. = executed
 k. = killed
 k.A. = killed at Agincourt
 R₂ = one of the dramatis personæ in *Richard II*
 R₃ = do. *Richard III*
 H₄¹ = do. *1 Henry IV*
 H₄² = do. *2 Henry IV*
 H₆¹ = do. *1 Henry VI*
 H₆² = do. *2 Henry VI*
 H₆³ = do. *3 Henry VI*
 H₅ = do. *Henry V*
 K_J = do. *King John*

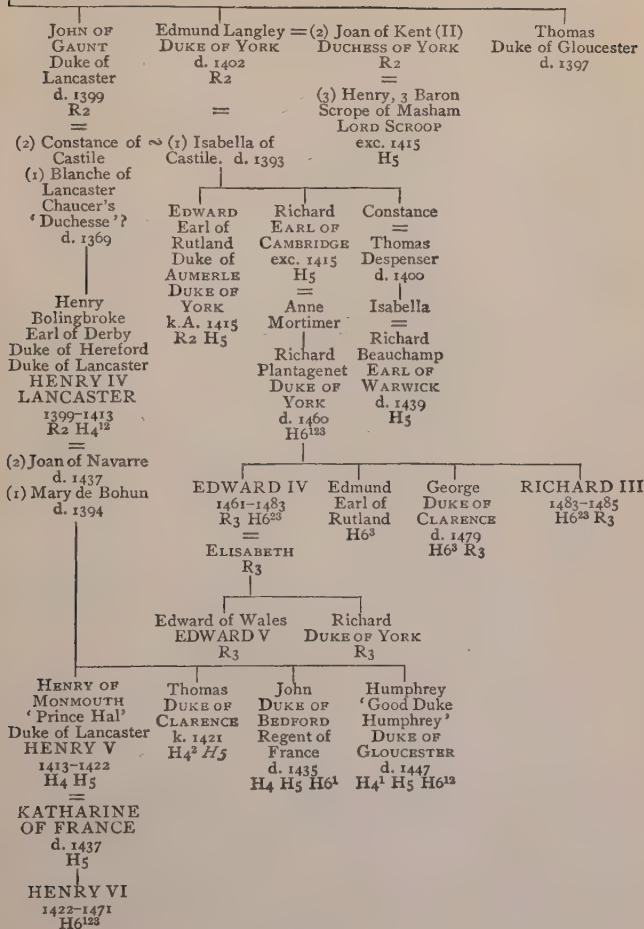
Italics indicate that the person is only mentioned in the play. Numerals in parentheses before a name indicate a first, second, or third marriage. Numerals after a king's reign indicate the dates of his reign.



CONNECTIONS

ENGLISH

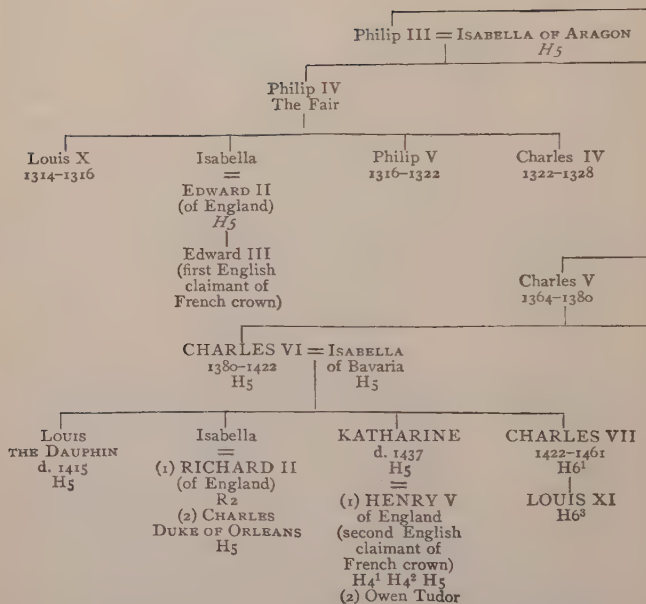
= Philippa of Hainault
d. 1369



HISTORICAL

III.

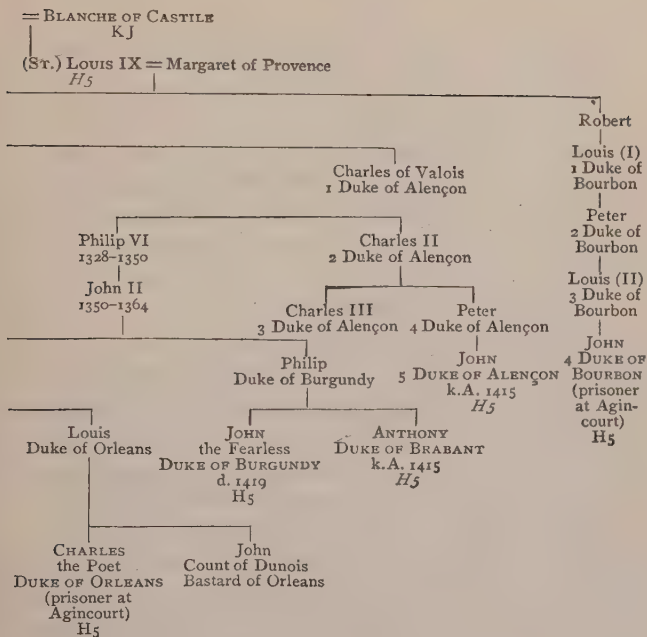
LOUIS VIII
1223-1226
KJ



In discussing the liberties taken by Shakespeare with chronology and historical fact, Ivor B. John has pointed out that he was more than justified in so doing: "The alterations made were absolutely necessary in order to obtain sufficient dramatic concentration. . . . As it is, the identification of

CONNECTIONS

FRENCH



Lymoges with Austria, the presence of Blanch in the interview between the kings, the sudden 'clapping up' of her marriage, and, above all, the close weaving together of the papal interference, the death of Arthur, the baronial revolt as if brought about by Arthur's supposed murder, and the French invasion—all these are felt to be dramatic gains."

VIII. THE CHARACTERS

The reign of King John saw the dawn of that genuine English nationality which has continued substantially to the present day. The faults and crimes of the sovereign seem to have had the effect of testing and toughening the national unity, just as certain diseases in infancy operate to strengthen the constitution of the man, and thus to prepare him for the struggles of life. England was then wrestled, as it were, into the beginnings of that indomitable self-reliance which she has since so gloriously maintained.

Shakespeare's vigorous and healthy national spirit is strongly manifested in the workmanship of *King John*. Faulconbridge serves as a chorus to give a right political interpretation of the events and action of the play. To him John impersonates the unity and majesty of the nation, so that defection from him tends to national dissolution. Whatever he may be as a man, as king, Patriotism must stand by him at all hazards, for the rights and interests of England are inseparably bound up with the reverence of his person and the maintenance of his title. Thus, in Faulconbridge's view, England can only rest true to herself by sticking to the king against all opposition. This principle is the moral backbone of the drama, however the poetry of it may turn upon other points.

The characterization of *King John* corresponds very well, in the degree of excellence, with the period to which its writing has been assigned. The delineation of the English barons is made to reflect the tumultuous and distracted condition of the time, when the best men were inwardly divided

and fluctuating between the claims of parliamentary election and actual possession on the one side, and the rights of lineal succession on the other. In such a conflict of duties and motives, the moral sense often sharply at odds with urgent political considerations, the clearest heads and most upright hearts are apt to lose their way; nor perhaps is it much to be wondered at if in such a state of things self-interest, the one constant motive of human action, gain such headway at last as to swamp all other interests. The noble and virtuous Salisbury successfully resists this depraving tendency, yet the thorns and dangers of the time prove too much for his judgment. From the outset he is divided between allegiance to John and to Arthur, till the crimes and cruelties of the former throw him quite over to the side of the latter. Humanity outwrestles nationality, and this even to the sacrifice of humanity itself, as matters turn. His scrupulous regard for moral rather than prudential motives draws him into serious error, which, to be sure, his rectitude of purpose is prompt to retrace, but not till the mistake has nearly crippled his power for good. His course well illustrates the peril to which goodness, more sensitive than far-sighted, is exposed in such a hard conflict of antagonist principles. In the practical exigencies of life, doing the best we can for those who stand nearest us is often nobler than living up to our own ideal. So there are times when men must "set up their rest" to stand by their country, right or wrong, and not allow any faults of her rulers to alienate them from her cause. Sometimes the highest sacrifice which is required of us is that of our finer moral feelings, nay, even of our sense of duty itself, to the rough occasions of patriotism. All this has been rarely exemplified in Salisbury, who was the famous

William Longsword, natural son to Henry II, and half-brother to John. It means much that our better feelings stay with him even when the more reckless spirit and coarse nature of Faulconbridge carry off our judgment.

JOHN

John, as he stands in history, was such a piece of irredeemable depravity, so thoroughly weak-headed and bloody-handed, that to set him forth truly without seeming to be dealing in caricature or lampoon required no little art. In his dying agony he truthfully pictured himself :

I am a scribbled form, drawn with a pen
Upon a parchment, and against this fire
Do I shrink up. [V, vii, 32-34]

Shakespeare was under the necessity of leaving his qualities to be inferred, in some measure, instead of showing them directly. The point was to disguise his meannesses, and yet so to order the disguise as to suggest that it covered something too vile to be seen. What could better infer his slinking, cowardly, malignant spirit than his two scenes with Hubert? Here he has neither the boldness to look his purpose in the face nor the rectitude to dismiss it. He has no way but to "dodge and palter in the shifts of lowness." He tries by hints and fawning innuendoes to secure the passage of his thought into effect, without committing himself to any responsibility for it; and wants another to be the agent of his will, and yet bear the blame as if acting of his own accord. Afterwards, when the consequences begin to press upon him, he accuses the aptness of the instrument as the cause of his suggestion; and the only sagacity he displays is in shirking the responsibility of his own guilty purpose, his sneaking, selfish fear

inspiring him with a quickness and fertility of thought far beyond his capacity under nobler influences.

The chief trouble with John in the play is, that he conceives himself in a false position, and so becomes himself false to his position in the hope of thereby rendering it secure. He has indeed far better reasons for holding the throne than he is himself aware of, and the utter selfishness of his aims is what keeps him from seeing them. His soul is so bemired in personal regards that he cannot rise to any considerations of patriotism or public spirit. The idea of wearing the crown as a sacred trust from the nation never enters his head. This is because he lacks the nobleness to rest his title on national grounds, or because he is himself too lawless of spirit to feel the majesty with which the national law has invested him. As the interest and honour of England have no place in his thoughts, so he feels as if he had stolen the throne, and appropriated it to his own private use. This consciousness of dishonourable motives naturally fills him with dark suspicions and sinister designs. As he is without the inward strength of noble aims, so he does not feel outwardly strong; his evil motives suggest using evil means for securing himself. Thus his sense of inherent baseness has the effect of urging him into disgraces and crimes, his very stings of self-reproach driving him on from bad to worse. If he had the manhood to trust his cause frankly with the nation, as rightly comprehending his trust, he would be strong in the nation's support, but this he cannot see.

John is not less wanting in manly fortitude than in moral principle; he has not the courage even to be daringly and resolutely wicked. There is no backbone of truth in him either for good or for evil. Insolent, self-confident, defiant

under success, he becomes utterly abject and cringing in disaster or reverse. When his wishes are crowned, he struts and talks big; but a slight whirl in the wind of chance at once lays him sprawling in the mud. We may almost apply to him what Ulysses says of Achilles in *Troilus and Cressida* :

Possess'd he is with greatness,
And speaks not to himself but with a pride
That quarrels at self-breath : imagined worth
Holds in his blood such swoln and hot discourse
That 'twixt his mental and his active parts
Kingdom'd Achilles in commotion rages
And batters down himself. [II, iii, 180-186]

Just as, in his craven-hearted selfishness, John cares nothing for England's honour, nor even for his own as king, but only to retain the spoil of his self-imputed trespass, so he will at any time trade that honour away, and will not mind cringing to the king of France or to the pope, so long as he may keep his place.

All this was no doubt partly owing to the demoralizing influences of the time. How deeply those influences worked is well shown in the hoary-headed fraud and heartlessness of Pandulf, who makes it his special business to abuse the highest faculties to the most refined ill purposes, with subtle and tortuous casuistry explaining away perfidy, treachery, and murder. The arts of deceit could hardly have come to be used with such complete self-approval, but from a long discipline of civilized selfishness in endeavoring to prevent or to parry the assaults of violence and barbarism. For, in a state of continual danger and insecurity, cultivated intelligence is naturally drawn to defend itself by subtlety and craft. The ethereal weapons of reason and sanctity are powerless

upon men stupefied by brutal passions; and this is too apt to generate even in the best characters a habit of seeking safety by "bowing their gray dissimulation" into whatever enterprises they undertake. This would go far to explain the alleged system of "pious frauds" once so little scrupled in the walks of religion and learning. Be this as it may, there was, it seems, virtue enough in the England of King John to bring her safe and sound through the vast perils and corruptions of the time. That reign was in truth the seed-bed of those forces which have since made England so great and wise and free.

All through the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII, the horrors of the civil slaughter of the York and Lancaster wars made the English people nervously apprehensive as to the consequences of a disputed title to the throne. This apprehension had by no means worn off in Shakespeare's time. The nation was still extremely tenacious of the lineal succession as the only practicable safeguard against the danger of rival claimants. The dogma of the divine right, which then got such headway, was probably more or less the offspring of this sentiment. Shakespeare, in his sympathy with this strong national feeling, was swayed somewhat from the strict line of historic truth and reason in ascribing John's crimes and follies, and the evils of his reign, so much to a public distrust of his title. It is questionable whether such distrust really had any considerable part in those evils. The king's title was generally held at the time to be sound, the nervous dread of a disputed succession being mainly the growth of later experience. The anxiety to fence off the evils so dreaded naturally caused the powers of the crown to be strained up to a pitch hardly compatible with any

degree of freedom. Thus at length another civil war became necessary to keep the liberties of England from being swallowed up in the Serbonian bog of royal prerogative. In the apprehension of an experienced danger on one side, men lost sight of an equal danger on the other side.

CONSTANCE

The genius and art of Mrs. Siddons in all likelihood caused the critics of her time and their immediate successors to set a higher estimate upon the delineation of Constance than is fully justified by the play. The part seems indeed to have been peculiarly suited to the powers of that remarkable actress, the wide range of moods and the tugging conflicts of passion, through which Constance passes, affording scope enough for the most versatile gifts of delivery. Shakespeare's conception of the character is far from displaying his full strength. There is in many of the speeches of Constance a redundancy of rhetoric and verbal ingenuity which gives them a too theatrical relish. The style thus falls under a reproof well expressed in this very play:

When workmen strive to do better than well,
They do confound their skill in covetousness.

[IV, ii, 28-29]

In pursuance of the same thought, Bacon remarks the great practical difference between the love of excellence and the love of excelling. So here we seem to have rather too much of that elaborate artificiality which springs more from ambition than from inspiration. The fault, however, is among those which mark the workmanship of Shakespeare's earlier period.

The idea pervading the delineation is well stated by Hazlitt¹ as "the excess of maternal tenderness, rendered desperate by the fickleness of friends and the injustice of fortune, and made stronger in will, in proportion to the want of all other power." In the judgment of Gervinus, "ambition spurred by maternal love, maternal love fired by ambition and womanly vanity, form the distinguishing features" of Constance; and he further describes her as "a woman whose weakness amounts to grandeur, and whose virtues sink into weakness." Gervinus is apt to be substantially right in such matters, but the character, though drawn in the best of situations for its amiability to appear, is not a very amiable one. Herein the play is perhaps the truer to history, for the chroniclers make Constance rather selfish and weak, and not so religious in motherhood but that she betrayed a somewhat unvenerable impatience of widowhood. Nevertheless it must be owned that the soul of maternal grief and affection speaks from her lips with not a little majesty of pathos, and occasionally flows in strains of the most melting tenderness. A mother's sorrow could not express itself more eloquently than in these lines:

Grief fills the room up of my absent child,
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form;
Then, have I reason to be fond of grief? [III, iv, 93-98]

There is no overstraining of nature in the imagery here used, for the speaker's passion is of just the right kind and degree to kindle the imagination into the richest and finest utterance.

¹ William Hazlitt, *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*.

On the other hand, the general effect of her sorrow is marred by too great an infusion of anger, and she shows too much pride, self-will, and volubility of scorn, to have the full touch of our sympathies. Thus, when Elinor coarsely provokes her, she retorts in a strain of still coarser railing; and the bandying of taunts and slurs between them, each not caring what she says, so her speech bites the other, is about equally damaging to them both. It is true, she meets with sore trials of patience, but these can hardly be said to open any springs of sweetness or beauty within her. When she finds that her heart's dearest cause is sacrificed to the schemes of politicians; when it turns out that the king of France and the Archduke of Austria are driving their own ends in her name, and only pretending conscientious purpose and pity for her, to cover their selfish projects, the heart-wringing disappointment inflames her into outbursts of sarcastic bitterness and scorn. Her speech sounds little like the sorrowing and disconsolate mother. The impression of her behavior in these points is well described by Gervinus: "What a variety of feeling is expressed in those twenty lines where she inquires anxiously after the truth of that which shocks her to hear! How her grief, so long as she is alone, restrains itself in calmer anguish in the vestibule of despair! how it first bursts forth in the presence of others in powerless revenge, rising to a curse which brings no blessing to herself! and how atoningly behind all this unwomanly rage lies the foil of maternal love! We should be moved with too violent a pity for this love, if it did not weaken our interest by its want of moderation; we should turn away from the violence of the woman, if the strength of her maternal affection did not irresistibly enchain us."

PRINCE ARTHUR

As Shakespeare used the license of art in stretching the life of Constance beyond its actual date so that he might enrich his work with the eloquence of a mother's love, he took a like freedom in making Arthur younger than the facts prescribed so that he might in larger measure pour in the sweetness of childish innocence and wit. Both of these departures from strict historic truth are highly judicious; at least they are amply redeemed by the dramatic wealth which comes in fitly through them. In the case of Arthur there is the further gain that the sparing of his eyes is because of his potency of tongue and the piercing touch of gentleness; whereas in history he is indebted for this to his strength of arm. The Arthur of the play is an artless, gentle, natural-hearted, but high-spirited, eloquent boy, in whom we have the voice of nature pleading for nature's rights, unrestrained by pride of character or place; who at first braves his uncle, because set on to do so by his mother, and afterwards fears him, yet knows not why, because his heart is too full of "the holiness of youth" to conceive how anything so treacherous and unnatural can be, as that which he fears. He not only has a most tender and loving disposition, such as cruelty itself can hardly resist, but is also persuasive and wise far beyond his years, though his power of thought and magic of speech are so managed as rather to aid the impression of his childish age. Observe how in the scene with Hubert his very terror creates in him a sort of preternatural illumination, and inspires him to a course of innocent and unconscious cunning—the perfect art of perfect artlessness. Of the scene in question Hazlitt justly says, "If anything ever

were penned, heart-piercing, mixing the extremes of terror and pity, of that which shocks and that which soothes the mind, it is this scene." Yet even here the tender pathos of the boy is marred with some "quirks of wit," such as Shakespeare would not have allowed in his best days. In Arthur's dying speech—"O me! my uncle's spirit is in these stones" (IV, iii, 9)—our distrust of John is most artfully heightened; all his foregoing inhumanity being, as it were, gathered and concentrated into an echo.

Shakespeare has several times thrown the witchery of his genius into pictures of nursery life, as in the case of Mamilius in *The Winter's Tale*, and of Lady Macduff and her son in *Macbeth*, bringing children upon the scene and delighting us with their innocent archness and sweet-witted prattle, but Arthur is his most powerful and charming piece of this kind. That he loved to play with childhood is not the least of Shakespeare's claims to our reverence.

FAULCONBRIDGE

The reign of King John furnished no characters fully answering the conditions of high dramatic interest. To meet this want there was need of one or more representative characters,—persons in whom should be centered and consolidated various elements of national character, which were in history dispersed through many individuals. Such a representative character is Faulconbridge, with his fiery flood of Norman vigor bounding through his veins, his irrepressible dance of animal spirits, his athletic and frolicsome wit, his big, brave, manly heart, his biting sword, and his tongue equally biting; his soul proof-armored against all fear save that of doing what is wrong or mean.

The Troublesome Raigne supplied the name, and also a slight hint towards the character:

Next them a bastard of the King deceased,
A hardy wild-head, rough and venturous.

But Faulconbridge is thoroughly Shakespearian, brimful of Shakespeare's most peculiar mental life; he is as different as can well be conceived from anything ever dreamed of in the Source-Quarto. It is specially worth noting that Shakespeare clearly embodies in him his own sentiment of nationality; he pours his hearty, full-souled English spirit into him and through him, so that the character is, at least in the political sense, truly representative of the author. All this is accomplished without the slightest tincture of egotism or self-obtrusion. To Faulconbridge the king, as before remarked, is truly the impersonation of the State; all those nobilities of thought and all those ideas of majesty and reverence which are wanting in John himself, he supplies in thought. He is fully alive to the moral baseness of the king, but the office is to him so sacred, as the palladium of national unity and life, that he will allow neither himself nor others in his presence to speak disrespectfully of the man.

Faulconbridge is strangely reckless of appearances, but his heart is evidently much better than his tongue. From his speech one might suppose gain to be his god, but a far truer language, which he uses without knowing it, tells us that gain is nothing to him. He talks as if he cared only for self-interest, while his works proclaim a spirit framed of disinterestedness, his action thus quietly giving the lie to his words. His course in this respect springs partly from an impulse of antagonism to the prevailing spirit about him, which

makes great pretense to virtue without a particle of the thing itself. What he most abominates is the pursuit of selfish and sinister ends under the garb of religion. Piety on the tongue with covetousness in the heart fills him with intense disgust: and his repugnance is so strong that it sets him spontaneously upon assuming a garb of selfishness to cover his real conscientiousness of mind and purpose. Secretly he is as generous as the sun, but his generosity puts on an affectation of rudeness or something worse: he will storm at you, to bluff you off from seeing the kindness he is doing you. Of the same kind is his hatred of cruelty and meanness. While these are rife about him, he never gets angry or makes any quarrel with them. On the contrary, he laughs and breaks sinewy jests over them, as if he thought them witty and smart. Upon witnessing the heartless and unprincipled bargaining of the kings, he passes it off jocosely as a freak of the "mad world," and verbally frames for himself a plan that "smacks somewhat of the policy." Then, instead of acting out what he thus seems to relish as a capital thing, he goes on to shame down, as far as may be, all such baseness by an example of straightforward nobleness and magnanimity.

Then too, with all his laughing roughness of speech and iron sternness of act, so blunt, bold, and downright, he is nevertheless full of humane and gentle feeling. With what burning eloquence of indignation does he denounce the supposed murder of Arthur! though he has no thought of abetting his claims to the throne against the present occupant. He abhors the deed as a crime, but to his keen, honest eye it is also a stupendous blunder. He deploras it as such, because its huge offensiveness to England's heart is what

makes it a blunder, and because he is himself in full sympathy with the national conscience, which cannot but be shocked at its hideous criminality. So it may be doubted whether he more resents the wickedness or the stupidity of the act:

From forth this morsel of dead royalty,
The life, the right and truth of all this realm
Is fled to heaven; and England now is left
To tug and scramble and to part by the teeth
The unowed interest of proud-swelling state.

[IV, iii, 143-147]

Shakespeare manages with great art that Faulconbridge be held to John throughout the play by ties which he is too clear of head and too upright of heart to think of renouncing. In the first place, he has been highly trusted and honoured by the king, and he cannot be ungrateful. Then again, in his clear-sighted and comprehensive public spirit, the diverse interests that split others into factions, and plunge them into deadly strife, are smoothly reconciled. Political regards work even more than personal gratitude, to keep him steadfast to the king, and he is ready with tongue and sword to beat down whatsoever obstructs a broad and generous nationality. His plain, frank nature either scorns the refinements of political diplomacy or is insensible to them, but his patriotism is thoroughly sound and true, and knows no fear.

As a representative character, Faulconbridge stands next to Falstaff. Thoroughly Gothic in features and proportions, and as thoroughly English in temper and spirit, his presence infuses life and true manliness into every part of the drama. He can well be described in the words with which he strove to rouse John to kingliness — "Be great in act, as you have been in thought" (V, 1, 45).

IX. STAGE HISTORY

It is a curious fact that from the time of Shakespeare to the year 1737 there is no record of a performance of *King John*, and we have only the testimony of the First Folio¹ that it had been staged before 1623. Since neither the voluble Pepys nor the painstaking Downes even mentions *King John*, it would seem to have remained for Colley Cibber, poet-laureate and theatrical manager, to revive the play. This he was the means of doing through a mangled version called *Papal Tyranny in the Reign of King John*, which he originally prepared about 1736. It is not certain whether this was actually produced in 1737 or was simply in process of rehearsal, but this much seems clear: the critics so bitterly protested against such tampering with Shakespeare that Cibber withdrew his play, the withdrawal being for a time the talk of London, even Pope immortalizing the event in *The Dunciad*.² It is interesting to note that political and ecclesiastical conditions similar to those which helped to create and shape *Kynge Johan* and *The Troublesome Raigne* in the sixteenth century were responsible for the revival of Cibber's version of Shakespeare's play in 1745, when the aged actor-author himself took the part of Pandulph.

The theatrical manager, Rich, noting that the critics, while railing against Cibber, had much to say in praise of Shakespeare, took the hint and resolved to revive the original. This

¹ " . . . these Playes have had their triall alreadie, and stood out all Appeales; and do now come forth quitted rather by a Decree of Court, then any purchas'd Letters of commendation." — To the great Variety of Readers.

² "King John in silence modestly expires." — I, 251.

revival in 1737 and 1738 at Covent Garden was eminently successful, and the Faulconbridge of Walker established a tradition for well sustained power that influenced the judgment on all subsequent interpretations of the part. On February 15, 1745, at Drury Lane, Garrick for the first time appeared as King John, with Mrs. Cibber as Constance, Delane as the Bastard, and Macklin as Pandulph. The critics were loud in their praise of Mrs. Cibber's Constance, which came to be known as her greatest rôle. Garrick was especially strong in the second scene of the fourth act. "His transitions from one passion to another were quick and animated: when Hubert showed him the warrant, he snatched it from his hand, and grasping it hard in an agony of despair and horror, he threw his eyes to heaven as if self-convicted of murder; in the dying scene likewise he was excellent."¹

The years from 1751 to 1783 saw a number of creditable performances both at Drury Lane and at Covent Garden, notably that of Sheridan and Garrick, in which Sheridan took the part of John and Garrick that of the Bastard. "But in the Bastard," says Davies, "all his spirit and art could not make amends for his deficiency in figure." The revival of the play in 1783 was made notable by the Kembles, especially Mrs. Siddons. Although the performances of Mrs. Siddons as Constance (see page xlv), John Kemble as King John, and Charles as Faulconbridge, were given popular approval, the inherent dramatic weaknesses of the play and the absence of those social and political conditions which gave popular interest to the earlier revivals prevented it from gaining a permanent hold on the theater-going public.

¹ Thomas Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies*.

In the early years of the nineteenth century the Keans and Macready attempted to revive the tragedy, Charles Kean producing it in both England and America. Miss Ellen Terry, then only ten years old, who appeared as Arthur in Kean's last production, gives in her autobiographic sketches¹ a fascinating description of her preparation for the part. Mr. Beerbohm Tree's revival in 1899 was an ambitious undertaking which held the boards longer than any of the earlier productions. He revised the play, dividing it into three acts, introduced two tableaux — one of the battle before Angiers, the other of the signing of Magna Charta — and devised much new stage business.

Due in no small degree to the brilliant criticism of Tieck and the excellence of the Schlegel-Tieck version, *King John* has been a favorite Shakespeare play in Germany; and from 1801, when an adaptation called *Arthur, Prinz von England*, was acted at Altona, it has had a firm hold on the modern German stage. Especially notable, because of a stage-setting which reproduced in a remarkable way the Elizabethan simplicity and imaginative appeal, was a revival in 1908 under the direction of Eugene Kilian at the Munich Hoftheater.

¹ *The Story of my Life*, pages 29-31.

AUTHORITIES

(With the more important abbreviations used in the notes)

F₁ = First Folio, 1623.

F₂ = Second Folio, 1632.

F₃ = Third Folio, 1663, 1664.

F₄ = Fourth Folio, 1685.

Ff = all the seventeenth century Folios.

Rowe = Rowe's editions, 1709, 1714.

Pope = Pope's editions, 1723, 1728.

Theobald = Theobald's editions, 1733, 1740.

Hanmer = Hanmer's edition, 1744.

Johnson = Johnson's edition, 1765.

Capell = Capell's edition, 1768.

Malone = Malone's edition, 1790.

Steevens = Steevens's edition, 1793.

Staunton = Harvard Staunton's edition, 1857-1860.

Globe = Globe edition (Clark and Wright), 1864.

Dyce = Dyce's (third) edition, 1875.

Delius = Delius's (fifth) edition, 1882.

Camb = Cambridge (third) edition (W. A. Wright), 1891.

Clar = Clarendon Press edition (W. A. Wright).

Herford = C. H. Herford's Eversley edition.

Abbott = E. A. Abbott's *A Shakespearian Grammar*.

Bradley = A. C. Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy*, 1904.

Cotgrave = Cotgrave's *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues*, 1611.

Schmidt = Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon*.

Skeat = Skeat's *An Etymological Dictionary*.

Murray = *A New English Dictionary (The Oxford Dictionary)*.

Holinshed = Holinshed's *Chronicles* (second edition), 1586-1587.

CHRONOLOGICAL CHART

Except in the case of Shakespeare's plays (see note) the literature dates refer to first publication

YEAR	SHAKESPEARE		BRITISH AND FOREIGN LITERATURE	HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY
	BIOGRAPHY; POEMS	PLAYS		
1564	Birth. Baptism, April 26, Stratford-on-Avon	NOTE. The plays in the columns below are arranged in the probable, though purely conjectural, order of composition. Dates appended to plays are those of first publication. Where no date is given, the play was first published in the First Folio (1623). M signifies that the play was mentioned by Meres in the Palladis Tamia (1598)	Quart livre de Panta-gruel	Michelangelo died. Calvin died. Marlowe born. Galileo born
1565	Father became alderman		Sackville and Norton's Gorboduc printed	Philip II of Spain gave his name to Philippine Islands
1566	Brother Gilbert born		Udall's Roister Doister printed?	Murder of Rizzio
1568	Father, as bailiff of Stratford, entertained Queen's and Earl of Worcester's actors		The Bishops Bible. La Taille's Saülle Furieux . R. Grafton's Chronicle	Mary of Scots a prisoner in England. Ascham died. Coverdale died. Netherlands War of Liberation
1572			Camoens' Os Lusíadas (The Lusíads)	Knox died. Massacre of St. Bartholomew
1573			Tasso's Aminta	Ben Jonson born? Donne born
1574	Brother Richard born		Mirror for Magistrates (third edition)	Earl of Leicester's players licensed
1575			Gammer Gurton's Needle . Golding's Ovid (complete)	Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth. Palissy lectured on Natural History
1576			The Paradise of Dainty Devices . Gascoigne's Steel Glass	"The Theatre" opened in Finsbury Fields, London, followed by "The Curtain." Hans Sachs died
1577	Father in financial difficulties		Holinshed's Chronicle	Drake sailed to circumnavigate globe

1579	Sister Ann died (aged eight)			Gosson's School of Abuse. North's Plutarch. Lyly's Euphuës (pt. 1). Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar	Union of Utrecht. Tasso put in confinement at Ferrara
1580	Brother Edmund born			Montaigne's Essais (first edition)	Brown founded Separatists. Camoens died
1581				Tasso's Gerusalemme Liberata	Dutch Declaration of Independence
1582	Married Anne Hathaway			The Rheims New Testament	Accademia della Crusca founded
1583	Daughter Susanna born			Garnier's Les Juives	Sir Humphrey Gilbert drowned
1584				Lyly's Campaspe. Peele's Arraignment of Paris	William the Silent assassinated. Ivan the Terrible died
1585	Twin children (Hamnet, Judith) born			Guarini's Pastor Fido (1590)	Ronsard died
1586	Probably went to London			Camden's Britannia	Sir Philip Sidney killed
1587				Hakluyt's Four Voyages. Faustbuch (Spiess, Frankfurt)	Execution of Mary of Scots
1588				Martin Marprelate: The Epistle	Defeat of Spanish Armada
1589				Puttenham's Art of English Poesie	Henry of Navarre, King of France. Palissy died in Bastille
1590		Love's Labour's Lost (M, 1598)		Marlowe's Tamburlaine. Spenser's Faerie Queene, I-III. Lodge's Rosalynde. Sidney's Arcadia	Battle of Ivry
1591		Comedy of Errors (M)	1 Henry VI 2 Henry VI	Sidney's Astrophel and Stella. Harington's tr. of Orlando Furioso	Herrick born

CHRONOLOGICAL CHART (CONTINUED)

YEAR	SHAKESPEARE			BRITISH AND FOREIGN LITERATURE	HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY
	BIOGRAPHY; POEMS	PLAYS (see note above)			
1592	Greene's attack in Groat'sworth of Wit	Two Gentlemen of Verona (M)	Richard III (M, 1597). 3 Henry VI	Daniel's <i>Delia</i> . <i>Lyly's</i> <i>Gallathea</i> (Galatea)	Greene died. Montaigne died. London theatres closed through plague
1593	Venus and Adonis (seven editions, 1593- 1602)		King John (M). Richard II (M, 1597)	Peele's Edward I. Barnes's Sonnets	Marlowe died. Herbert born
1594	Lucrece (five editions, 1594-1616)	A Midsummer Night's Dream (M, 1600)		Kinucini's <i>Dafne</i> . <i>Sat- ire Menippe</i>	Palestrina ("Princeps Musicae") died
1595	Valuable contemporary references to Shake- speare	All's Well that Ends Well. Taming of the Shrew		Peele's <i>Old Wives'</i> <i>Tale</i> . Spenser's <i>Epi- thalamion</i>	Tasso died. Sir Walter Raleigh's expedition to Guiana. Sir J. Haw- kins died
1596	Son Hamnet died. Fam- ily applied for coat-of- arms		1 Henry IV (M, 1598). 2 Henry IV (1600)	Drayton's <i>Mortimeria- dos</i> . <i>Faerie Queene</i> , Books IV-VI	Burbage built Black- friar's Theatre. Des- cartes born. Sir F. Drake died
1597	Purchased New Place, Stratford	Merry Wives of Windsor. Mer- chant of Venice (M, 1600)		Bacon's <i>Essays</i> (first edition). Hall's <i>Virgi- demiarum</i>	The Tyrone rebellion
1598	Shakespeare acted in Jonson's <i>Every Man</i> in <i>His Humour</i>	Much Ado About Nothing (1600)	Henry V (1600)	Meres's <i>Palladis Ta- mia</i> . Chapman's <i>Ho- mer</i> (pt. r). <i>Lope de</i> <i>Vega's Arcadia</i>	Peele died. Edict of Nantes
1599	Part proprietor of Globe Theatre. Coat-of-arms granted. The <i>Passion- ate Pilgrim</i>	As You Like It		Aleman's <i>Guzman de</i> <i>Alfarache</i> . Peele's <i>David and Bethsabe</i>	Spenser died. Globe Theatre built. Oliver Cromwell born
1600	Won a London lawsuit	Twelfth Night		England's <i>Helicon</i>	Calderon born. Bruno died

1601	Father died. The Phoenix and Turtle			Julius Cæsar	Jonson's Poetaster	The Essex plot. Rivalry between London adult and boy actors
1602	Purchased more Stratford real estate			Hamlet (1603)	Dekker's Satiromastix	Bodleian Library founded
1603	His company acted before the Queen	Troilus and Cressida (1600)			Jonson's Sejanus	Queen Elizabeth died. Millenary Petition
1604	Sued Rogers at Stratford	Measure for Measure		Othello	Marlowe's Faustus (1588-1589)	Hampton Court Conference
1605	Godfather to William D'Avenant			Macbeth	Don Quixote (pt. 1)	Gunpowder plot. Sir Thomas Browne born
1606	King Lear given before Court			King Lear (1608)	Chapman's Monsieur D'Olive	Lyly died. Corneille born
1607	Daughter Susanna married Dr. Hall			Timon of Athens	Dekker and Webster's Westward Ho!	Settlement of Jamestown
1608	Birth of granddaughter, Elizabeth Hall. Death of mother (Mary Arden)	Pericles (1609)		Antony and Cleopatra	Captain John Smith's A True Relation. Middleton's A Mad World	Milton born. Quebec founded
1609	Sonnets. A Lover's Complaint			Coriolanus	The Douai Old Testament	Separatists (Pilgrims) in Leyden
1610	Purchased more real estate	Cymbeline			Strachey's Wracke and Redemption	Henry IV (Navarre) assassinated
1611	Subscribed for better highways	Winter's Tale The Tempest			King James Bible (A.V.). Bellarmine's Puissance du Pape	Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden
1613	Invested in London house property. Brother Richard died	Henry VIII			Drayton's Polyolbion	Globe Theatre burned
1616	Made his will. Daughter Judith married Thomas Quiney. Died April 23 (May 3, New Style)				Captain John Smith's New England. Folio edition of Jonson's Poems. D'Aubigné's Les Tragiques (1577)	Cervantes died. Beaumont died. Baffin explores Baffin's Bay. Harvey lectured on the circulation of the blood

DISTRIBUTION OF CHARACTERS

In this analysis are shown the acts and scenes in which the characters (see *Dramatis Personæ*, page 2) appear, with the number of speeches and lines given to each.

NOTE. Parts of lines are counted as whole lines.

		NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES			NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES
KING JOHN	I, i	16	48	HUBERT	III, iii	5	8
	II, i	23	99		IV, i	20	42
	III, i	6	33		IV, ii	6	35
	III, ii	1	3		IV, iii	10	25
	III, iii	10	64		V, iii	1	1
	IV, ii	22	120		V, vi	10	24
	V, i	7	27			52	135
	V, iii	4	8	ROBERT FAUL- CONBRIDGE }	I, i	4	14
	V, vii	4	28				
		93	430				
PRINCE HENRY	V, vii	8	29	PHILIP THE BASTARD	I, i	20	141
					II, i	15	123
ARTHUR	II, i	2	9		III, i	7	9
	III, i	1	1		III, ii	2	8
	III, iii	1	1		III, iii	1	5
	IV, i	18	99		IV, ii	5	22
	IV, iii	1	10		IV, iii	12	57
		23	120		V, i	5	43
PEMBROKE	IV, ii	8	56		V, ii	5	53
	IV, iii	7	9		V, vi	10	20
	V, iv	3	4		V, vii	7	39
	V, vii	2	6			89	520
		20	75				
ESSEX	I, i	1	3	JAMES GURNEY	I, i	1	1
SALISBURY	III, i	3	6	PETER	IV, ii	1	1
	IV, ii	6	28	PHILIP, KING OF FRANCE	II, i	24	115
	IV, iii	15	46		III, i	9	48
	V, i	1	32		III, iv	9	26
	V, iv	6	19			42	189
	V, vii	5	20	LEWIS, THE DAUPHIN	II, i	5	23
		36	151		III, i	4	8
BIGOT	IV, iii	7	9		III, iv	8	18
					V, ii	7	83
					V, v	4	17
						28	149

		NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES			NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES
DUKE OF AUSTRIA	II, i III, i	9 7 <u>16</u>	28 8 <u>36</u>	BLANCH	II, i III, i	3 6 <u>9</u>	15 27 <u>42</u>
PANDULPH	III, i III, iv V, i V, ii	8 9 2 <u>4</u> 23	71 67 11 <u>15</u> 164	LADY FAUL- CONBRIDGE }	I, i	5	15
MELUN	V, iv	3	39	CITIZEN	II, i	10	64
CHATILLON	I, i II, i	4 1 <u>5</u>	16 25 41	FRENCH HERALD }	II, i	1	12
QUEEN ELINOR	I, i II, i III, i III, iii	9 8 2 <u>3</u> 22	26 21 2 <u>3</u> 52	ENGLISH HERALD }	II, i	1	13
CONSTANCE	II, i III, i III, iv	10 17 8 <u>35</u>	48 142 74 264	1 EXECUTIONER	IV, i	2	2
				MESSENGER	IV, ii V, iii V, v	4 2 <u>3</u> 9	14 8 6 28

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF
KING JOHN

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ¹

KING JOHN

PRINCE HENRY, son to the king

ARTHUR, Duke of Bretagne, nephew to the king

The Earl of PEMBROKE

The Earl of ESSEX

The Earl of SALISBURY

The Lord BIGOT

HUBERT DE BURGH

ROBERT FAULCONBRIDGE, son to Sir Robert Faulconbridge

PHILIP the BASTARD, his half-brother

JAMES GURNEY, servant to Lady Faulconbridge

PETER of Pomfret, a prophet

PHILIP, king of France

LEWIS, the Dauphin

LYMOGES, Duke of Austria

CARDINAL PANDULPH, the Pope's legate

MELUN, a French lord

CHATILLON, ambassador from France to King John²

QUEEN ELINOR,³ mother to King John

CONSTANCE, mother to Arthur

BLANCH of Spain, niece to King John

LADY FAULCONBRIDGE, widow to Sir Robert Faulconbridge

Lords, Citizens of Angiers, Sheriff, Heralds, Officers, Soldiers,
Messengers, and other Attendants

SCENE: *Partly in England, and partly in France*

¹ DRAMATIS PERSONÆ. Rowe was the first to give a list of the characters.

² Not a historical character. The Folios spell the word 'Chatyllion,' 'Chattillion,' etc., indicating the English pronunciation.

³ ELINOR. Some modern editors use the form 'Eleanor.'

ACT I

SCENE I. [KING JOHN'S *palace*]

Enter KING JOHN, QUEEN ELINOR, PEMBROKE, ESSEX,
SALISBURY [*and others*], *with* CHATILLON

KING JOHN. Now say, Chatillon, what would France
with us?

CHATILLON. Thus, after greeting, speaks the king of France,
In my behaviour to the majesty,
The borrowed majesty, of England here.

ELINOR. A strange beginning: 'borrowed majesty'? 5

KING JOHN. Silence, good mother, hear the embassy.

CHATILLON. Philip of France, in right and true behalf
Of thy deceased brother Geffrey's son,
Arthur Plantagenet, lays most lawful claim
To this fair island, and the territories: 10
To Ireland, Poitiers, Anjou, Touraine, Maine,
Desiring thee to lay aside the sword
Which sways usurpingly these several titles,
And put the same into young Arthur's hand,
Thy nephew, and right royal sovereign. 15

ACT I. SCENE I. In the First Folio the play is divided somewhat
carelessly into acts and scenes, but there is no indication of the loca-
tion of the scenes. The bracketed matter in this, and in other stage
directions throughout the play, is the work of Rowe and later editors.

3. In my behaviour: through my conduct as ambassador.

4. borrowed. A mild way of saying 'usurped.' Cf. lines 12-15.

KING JOHN. What follows if we disallow of this?

CHATILLON. The proud control of fierce and bloody war,
To enforce these rights, so forcibly withheld.

KING JOHN. Here have we war for war, and blood for blood,
Controlment for controlment: so answer France. 20

CHATILLON. Then take my king's defiance from my mouth,
The farthest limit of my embassy.

KING JOHN. Bear mine to him, and so depart in peace:
Be thou as lightning in the eyes of France;
For ere thou canst report, I will be there, 25
The thunder of my cannon shall be heard:
So hence! Be thou the trumpet of our wrath,
And sullen presage of your own decay:
An honourable conduct let him have:
Pembroke, look to 't: farewell, Chatillon. 30

Exeunt CHATILLON and PEMBROKE

ELINOR. What now, my son! have I not ever said
How that ambitious Constance would not cease
Till she had kindled France and all the world
Upon the right and party of her son?
This might have been prevented, and made whole 35
With very easy arguments of love,
Which now the manage of two kingdoms must
With fearful bloody issue arbitrate.

16. disallow of: refuse to admit. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, IV, ii, 63: "ere I will allow of thy wits."

27. trumpet: trumpeter. An example of metonymy.

28. sullen: gloomy, melancholy. Commonly so. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, IV, v, 88: "Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change."

29. conduct: escort. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, III, iv, 265.

37. manage: management, administration. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, III, iv, 25. From O. Fr. *manege*, Latin *managium* (*manus*).

KING JOHN. Our strong possession and our right for us.

ELINOR. Your strong possession much more than your
right, 40

Or else it must go wrong with you and me.

So much my conscience whispers in your ear,

Which none but heaven and you and I shall hear.

Enter a Sheriff

ESSEX. My liege, here is the strangest controversy

Come from the country to be judg'd by you 45

That e'er I heard : shall I produce the men ?

KING JOHN. Let them approach :

Our abbeyes and our priories shall pay

This expedition's charge.

Enter ROBERT FAULCONBRIDGE, and PHILIP

What men are you ?

BASTARD. Your faithful subject, I a gentleman 50

Born in Northamptonshire, and eldest son,

As I suppose, to Robert Faulconbridge,

A soldier by the honour-giving hand

Of Cœur-de-lion, knighted in the field.

KING JOHN. What art thou ? 55

ROBERT. The son and heir to that same Faulconbridge.

KING JOHN. Is that the elder, and art thou the heir ?

You came not of one mother then, it seems.

BASTARD. Most certain of one mother, mighty king,

That is well known, and, as I think, one father : 60

But for the certain knowledge of that truth,

I put you o'er to heaven and to my mother.
Of that I doubt, as all men's children may.

ELINOR. Out on thee, rude man! thou dost shame thy
mother

And wound her honour with this diffidence. 65

BASTARD. I, madam? No, I have no reason for it.
That is my brother's plea; and none of mine
The which if he can prove, a pops me out
At least from fair five hundred pound a year:
Heaven guard my mother's honour and my land! 70

KING JOHN. A good blunt fellow. Why, being younger
born,
Doth he lay claim to thine inheritance?

BASTARD. I know not why, except to get the land:
But once he slander'd me with bastardy:
But whe'er I be as true begot or no, 75
That still I lay upon my mother's head;
But that I am as well begot, my liege, —
Fair fall the bones that took the pains for me! —
Compare our faces and be judge yourself.
If old sir Robert did beget us both 80
And were our father, and this son like him;
O old sir Robert, father, on my knee
I give heaven thanks I was not like to thee.

KING JOHN. Why, what a madcap hath heaven lent us here!

ELINOR. He hath a trick of Cœur-de-lion's face, 85

68. a: he. A dialectic form often written 'a or a'.

75. whe'er: whether. So in II, i, 167. See Abbott, § 466.

78. fair fall: may luck prosperously befall.

85. trick: characteristic peculiarity. The expression is from heraldry. Cf. *King Lear*, IV, vi, 108: "the trick of that voice."

The accent of his tongue affecteth him :
Do you not read some tokens of my son
In the large composition of this man ?

KING JOHN. Mine eye hath well examined his parts
And finds them perfect Richard. Sirrah, speak 90
What doth move you to claim your brother's land ?

BASTARD. Because he hath a half-face like my father.
With half that face would he have all my land,
A half-fac'd groat, five hundred pound a year !

ROBERT. My gracious liege, when that my father liv'd, 95
Your brother did employ my father much.

BASTARD. Well, sir, by this you cannot get my land :
Your tale must be how he employ'd my mother.

ROBERT. And once dispatch'd him in an embassy
To Germany, there with the emperor 100
To treat of high affairs touching that time.
Th' advantage of his absence took the king
And in the mean time sojourn'd at my father's ;
Where how he did prevail, I shame to speak,
But truth is truth, large lengths of seas and shores 105
Between my father and my mother lay,
As I have heard my father speak himself

86. *affecteth* : resembles, takes after. A rare use of the word.

88. *large composition* : big build. Cf. *1 Henry VI*, II, iii, 75.

92. *half-face* : profile. Some editors interpret it as 'thin, narrow face.'

93. *half that face*. Theobald proposed to read 'that half face.'

94. *half-fac'd groat*. The groats of Henry VII had the royal face in profile. Hence the phrase 'half-faced groat' came to be used contemptuously of a meager visage. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, III, ii, 283 : "this same half-fac'd fellow, Shallow." The groat was first coined in the reign of Edward III, a century after the time of King John.

When this same lusty gentleman was got :
 Upon his death-bed he by will bequeath'd
 His lands to me, and took it on his death 110
 That this my mother's son was none of his ;
 And if he were, he came into the world
 Full fourteen weeks before the course of time :
 Then, good my liege, let me have what is mine,
 My father's land, as was my father's will. 115

KING JOHN. Sirrah, your brother is legitimate.
 Your father's wife did after wedlock bear him,
 And if she did play false, the fault was hers ;
 Which fault lies on the hazards of all husbands
 That marry wives : tell me, how if my brother, 120
 Who, as you say, took pains to get this son,
 Had of your father claim'd this son for his :
 In sooth, good friend, your father might have kept
 This calf bred from his cow from all the world :
 In sooth he might : then, if he were my brother's, 125
 My brother might not claim him, nor your father,
 Being none of his, refuse him. This concludes
 My mother's son did get your father's heir ;
 Your father's heir must have your father's land.

ROBERT. Shall then my father's will be of no force 130

110. took it : affirmed it. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, V, iv, 154-155 : "I'll take it upon my death I gave him this wound in the thigh."

114. good my liege : my good liege. See Abbott, § 13.

119. on the hazards : among the ventures. Cf. V, vi, 7. 'Hazard' was originally a game of chance with dice. Cf. *Richard III*, V, iv, 10.

123-124. kept . . . from all the world : retained against the claims of all the world. Steevens points out that according to Hindu law calves belonged solely to the proprietors of the cows.

127. Being none of his : although he was none of his.

To dispossess that child which is not his?

BASTARD. Of no more force to dispossess me, sir,
Than was his will to get me, as I think.

ELINOR. Whether hadst thou rather be a Faulconbridge,
And, like thy brother, to enjoy thy land, 135
Or the reputed son of Cœur-de-lion,
Lord of thy presence and no land beside?

BASTARD. Madam, and if my brother had my shape
And I had his, Sir Robert's his, like him;
And if my legs were two such riding-rods, 140
My arms such eel-skins stuff'd, my face so thin
That in mine ear I durst not stick a rose
Lest men should say 'Look, where three-farthings goes!'
And, to his shape, were heir to all this land, —
Would I might never stir from off this place! — 145

138. and if Ff | an if Hanmer Globe.

137. presence: (objective) personality, outward appearance. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, I, v, 75: "Show a fair presence and put off these frowns"; *Troilus and Cressida*, III, iii, 272-273: "I will put on his presence." Halliwell-Phillips quotes Sir Henry Wotton (1568-1639), "Character of a Happy Life":

Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

139. The general meaning is obvious: "if my brother had my shape and I had his." With each 'his' he points at Robert's figure; with 'him' he points at Robert's face. The second 'his' repeats the first, with dramatic effect.

140. riding-rods: rods or switches used in riding.

142-143. Elizabeth coined three-farthing pieces of silver. These bore the queen's profile with a rose behind her ear. Being of silver, they were very thin. A thin-faced beau wearing the customary rose in his earlock might well be compared to them.

144. to: in addition to. Frequently so. Cf. *Macbeth*, III, i, 52.

I would give it every foot to have this face ;

I would not be Sir Nob in any case.

ELINOR. I like thee well : wilt thou forsake thy fortune,
Bequeath thy land to him, and follow me ?

I am a soldier, and now bound to France. 150

BASTARD. Brother, take you my land, I'll take my chance.
Your face hath got five hundred pound a year,
Yet sell your face for five pence and 't is dear.

Madam, I'll follow you unto the death.

ELINOR. Nay, I would have you go before me thither. 155

BASTARD. Our country manners give our betters way.

KING JOHN. What is thy name ?

BASTARD. Philip, my liege, so is my name begun ;
Philip, good old Sir Robert's wife's eldest son.

KING JOHN. From henceforth bear his name whose form
thou bear'st : 160

Kneel thou down Philip, but rise more great,
Arise Sir Richard and Plantagenet.

BASTARD. Brother by th' mother's side, give me your hand ;
My father gave me honour, yours gave land.
Now blessed be the hour, by night or day, 165
When I was got, Sir Robert was away !

ELINOR. The very spirit of Plantagenet !
I am thy grandam, Richard ; call me so.

BASTARD. Madam, by chance but not by truth ; what though ?

147. I F₂F₈F₄ | It F₁.

147. Nob : Robert. A familiar name, used here contemptuously.

162. Plantagenet. Originally a nickname given to the first Earl of Anjou, who wore a twig of broom (*planta genista*) in his bonnet.

169. by truth : honestly. Cf. 'true,' *Much Ado About Nothing*, III, iii, 1. — what though : what of it ? Cf. *Henry V*, II, i, 9.

Something about, a little from the right, 170
 In at the window, or else o'er the hatch:
 Who dares not stir by day must walk by night,
 And have is have, however men do catch:
 Near or far off, well won is still well shot,
 And I am I, howe'er I was begot. 175

KING JOHN. Go, Faulconbridge: now hast thou thy desire;
 A landless knight makes thee a landed squire.
 Come, madam, and come, Richard, we must speed
 For France, for France, for it is more than need.

BASTARD. Brother, adieu: good fortune come to thee!
 For thou wast got i' th' way of honesty. 181

Exeunt all but BASTARD

A foot of honour better than I was;
 But many a many foot of land the worse.
 Well, now can I make any Joan a lady.
 'Good den, Sir Richard!' — 'God-a-mercy, fellow!' — 185
 And if his name be George, I'll call him Peter;
 For new-made honour doth forget men's names;

170. Somewhat about, a little out of the beaten path.

171. *hatch*: the lower half of a divided door. The upper half could be open while the lower half was closed. Cf. *King Lear*, III, vi, 76: "Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled."

174. *Near or far off*: close to or wide of the mark.

177. *A landless knight*. Philip had given his land to his brother.

185. Philip gives an example of the salutation of a vassal, and his reply to it. — *Good den*: good evening. A salutation after noon. Mutilated from 'God give you good even.' Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, II, iv, 116. — *God-a-mercy*: God have mercy, God reward you. The phrase came to be a mere expression of thanks. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, v, 199; II, ii, 171-172:

POLONIUS. How does my good Lord Hamlet?

HAMLET. Well, God-a-mercy,

'Tis too respective and too sociable
 For your conversion. Now your traveller,
 He and his toothpick at my worship's mess, 190
 And when my knightly stomach is suffic'd,
 Why then I suck my teeth and catechize
 My picked man of countries: 'My dear sir,'
 Thus, leaning on mine elbow, I begin,
 'I shall beseech you' — that is question now; 195
 And then comes answer like an Absey book:
 'O sir,' says answer, 'at your best command,
 At your employment; at your service, sir':
 'No, sir,' says question, 'I, sweet sir, at yours':
 And so ere answer knows what question would, 200
 Saving in dialogue of compliment,
 And talking of the Alps and Apennines,
 The Pyrenean and the river Po,

188-189. 'Tis . . . conversion: remembering men's names implies too much thought of others, and too much community of feeling, for one that has just been lifted into nobility of rank. He thus ridicules the affectations of aristocratic greenhorns. — **respective**: considerate. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, V, i, 156.

189. **traveller**. In Shakespeare's time, which was an age of newly awakened curiosity, with but small means of gratifying it, travelers were much welcomed to the tables of the rich and noble. This naturally brought about a good deal of imposture from such as were more willing to wag their tongues than to work with their hands.

190. **toothpick**. The traveler uses the foreign custom of picking his teeth, while the host sucks his (line 192).

193. **picked**: fastidious. With a play on 'toothpick' (line 190). Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, V, i, 14-16: "He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it."

196. **Absey book**: ABC book, primer (often with catechism; suggested here by 'catechize,' line 192).

203. **Pyrenean**: Pyrenees. It represents the Latin *Mons Pyrenæus*.

It draws toward supper in conclusion so.
 But this is worshipful society, --- 205
 And fits the mounting spirit like myself;
 For he is but a bastard to the time
 That doth not smack of observation,
 And so am I, whether I smack or no:
 And not alone in habit and device, 210
 Exterior form, outward accoutrement;
 But from the inward motion to deliver
 Sweet, sweet, sweet poison for the age's tooth;
 Which though I will not practise to deceive,
 Yet, to avoid deceit, I mean to learn; 215
 For it shall strew the footsteps of my rising.
 But who comes in such haste in riding-robcs?
 What woman-post is this? hath she no husband
 That will take pains to blow a horn before her?

207. a bastard to the time: no true child of the age.

208. observation. A play on the two meanings of the word, 'seeing the world' and 'obsequiousness.' He has neither the outward show (lines 210, 211) of the fastidious traveler (line 193), nor the inner impulse to be a flatterer (lines 212, 213).

212. motion: impulse. Cf. IV, ii, 255.

214-215. Though I will not practice administering the poison of flattery for the sake of deceiving, yet to avoid being deceived I mean to learn its use. The Bastard intends to study the arts of popularity, not to deceive the people, but to overmatch the cheats and demagogues about him. Shakespeare here prepares us for the honest and noble part which Faulconbridge takes in the play.

216. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, I, i, 55-56: "And do you now strew flowers in his way, That comes in triumph"; *Antony and Cleopatra*, I, iii, 100-101: "and smooth success Be strew'd before your feet"; *Matthew*, xxi, 8.

219. horn. A double allusion. A post carried a horn (cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, V, i, 47), and a man deceived by his wife was said to wear horns (cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, I, i, 266).

Enter LADY FAULCONBRIDGE *and* JAMES GURNEY

O me! 't is my mother. How now, good lady? 220

What brings you here to court so hastily?

LADY FAULCONBRIDGE. Where is that slave, thy brother?
where is he,

That holds in chase mine honour up and down?

BASTARD. My brother Robert? old Sir Robert's son?
Colbrand the giant, that same mighty man? 225

Is it Sir Robert's son that you seek so?

LADY FAULCONBRIDGE. Sir Robert's son! ay, thou un-
reverend boy,

Sir Robert's son? why scorn'st thou at Sir Robert?

He is Sir Robert's son, and so art thou. 229

BASTARD. James Gurney, wilt thou give us leave awhile?

GURNEY. Good leave, good Philip.

BASTARD. Philip! sparrow: James,
There's toys abroad: anon I'll tell thee more. *Exit* GURNEY

225. Colbrand. The Danish giant whom Guy of Warwick vanquished in the presence of King Athelstan. Cf. *Henry VIII*, V, iv, 22.

231. Good leave, good Philip. Gurney's only speech. Coleridge says, "How individual and comical he is with the four words allowed to his dramatic life!" — Philip! sparrow. Gurney's use of the old name enables Philip to make a pun. The sparrow was called Philip (or Phip), because its note resembles that name. Cf. Lyly, *Mother Bombe*: "Phip, phip, the sparrows as they flye." So also in Skelton, *Dirge for Phyllip Sparowe*:

And whan I sayd, 'Phyp! Phyp!
Than wold he lepe and skyp,
And take me by the lyp.

Catullus, in his elegy on Lesbia's sparrow, coined the verb *pipilabat*, to express the note of that bird.

232. toys: odd stories. Cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, i, 3: "These antique fables, nor these fairy toys."

Madam, I was not old Sir Robert's son:
Sir Robert might have eat his part in me
Upon Good Friday and ne'er broke his fast: 235
Sir Robert could do well: marry, to confess,
Could he get me? Sir Robert could not do it:
We know his handiwork: therefore, good mother,
To whom am I beholding for these limbs?
Sir Robert never help to make this leg. 240

LADY FAULCONBRIDGE. Hast thou conspired with thy
brother too,
That for thine own gain shouldst defend mine honour?
What means this scorn, thou most untoward knave?

BASTARD. Knight, knight, good mother, Basilisco-like:
What! I am dubb'd! I have it on my shoulder. 245
But, mother, I am not Sir Robert's son;
I have disclaim'd Sir Robert and my land;
Legitimation, name and all is gone;
Then, good my mother, let me know my father:
Some proper man, I hope: who was it, mother? 250

LADY FAULCONBRIDGE. Hast thou denied thyself a Faul-
conbridge?

BASTARD. As faithfully as I deny the devil.

239. beholding: beholden, indebted. See Abbott, § 372.

244. Knight . . . Basilisco-like. Like Basilisco, he would be called 'knight,' not 'knave' (line 243). The allusion is to Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda*, I, iii, 169-171:

PISTON. I, the aforesaid Basilisco,—

BASILISCO. I, the aforesaid Basilisco — Knight, good fellow, Knight,
Knight—

PISTON. Knave, good fellow, Knave, Knave . . .

249. good my mother: my good mother. See note, line 114.

250. proper: comely. Often so in sixteenth century literature.

LADY FAULCONBRIDGE. King Richard Cœur-de-lion was
thy father :

By long and vehement suit I was seduc'd
To make room for him in my husband's bed : 255
Heaven lay not my transgression to my charge !
Thou art the issue of my dear offence,
Which was so strongly urg'd past my defence.

BASTARD. Now, by this light, were I to get again,
Madam, I would not wish a better father. 260
Some sins do bear their privilege on earth,
And so doth yours ; your fault was not your folly :
Needs must you lay your heart at his dispose,
Subjected tribute to commanding love,
Against whose fury and unmatched force 265
The aweless lion could not wage the fight,
Nor keep his princely heart from Richard's hand.
He that perforce robs lions of their hearts
May easily win a woman's. Ay, my mother,
With all my heart I thank thee for my father ! 270
Who lives and dares but say thou didst not well
When I was got, I 'll send his soul to hell.
Come, lady, I will show thee to my kin ;
And they shall say, when Richard me begot,
If thou hadst said him nay, it had been sin ; 275
Who says it was, he lies : I say 't was not. *Exeunt*

257. Thou F₄ | That F₁F₂F₃ Delius.

257. dear : grievous. 'Dear' is used in Elizabethan literature to describe anything that affects us deeply, for joy or pain.

266. aweless : not to be awed, dauntless. The allusion is to the legend that Richard derived his name of Lion-heart from having torn out and eaten the heart of a lion, to which he had been exposed by the Duke of Austria. Cf. II, i, 3.

ACT II

SCENE I. [*France*] *Before Angiers*

Enter AUSTRIA [*and forces, drums, etc. on one side: on the other*] KING PHILIP of France [*and his power*]; LEWIS, ARTHUR, CONSTANCE [*and Attendants*]

LEWIS. Before Angiers well met, brave Austria.
Arthur, that great forerunner of thy blood,
Richard, that robb'd the lion of his heart,
And fought the holy wars in Palestine,
By this brave duke came early to his grave: 5
And for amends to his posterity,
At our importance hither is he come,
To spread his colours, boy, in thy behalf,
And to rebuke the usurpation
Of thy unnatural uncle, English John: 10
Embrace him, love him, give him welcome hither.

ARTHUR. God shall forgive you Cœur-de-lion's death
The rather that you give his offspring life,
Shadowing their right under your wings of war:
I give you welcome with a powerless hand, 15

ACT II. SCENE I Rowe | Scaena Secunda Ff.

1. *Austria*. Leopold, Duke of Austria, who imprisoned Richard.
2. Arthur was Richard's nephew. The terms 'forerunner,' 'posterity' (lines 6, 96), 'offspring' (line 13), are used very loosely.
7. *importance*: importunity. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, V, i, 371.
9. *rebuke*: check, repress. Cf. *Macbeth*, III, i, 56.

But with a heart full of unstained love :
 Welcome before the gates of Angiers, duke.

LEWIS. A noble boy ! who would not do thee right ?

AUSTRIA. Upon thy cheek lay I this zealous kiss,
 As seal to this indenture of my love, 20
 That to my home I will no more return,
 Till Angiers and the right thou hast in France,
 Together with that pale, that white-fac'd shore,
 Whose foot spurns back the ocean's roaring tides,
 And coops from other lands her islanders, 25
 Even till that England, hedg'd in with the main,
 That water-walled bulwark, still secure
 And confident from foreign purposes,
 Even till that utmost corner of the west
 Salute thee for her king : till then, fair boy, 30
 Will I not think of home, but follow arms.

CONSTANCE. O, take his mother's thanks, a widow's thanks,
 Till your strong hand shall help to give him strength
 To make a more requital to your love !

AUSTRIA. The peace of heaven is theirs that lift their swords
 In such a just and charitable war. 36

29. *utmost* F₁F₂F₃ | *outmost* F₄. 35. *that* F₁F₂F₃ | *who* F₄.

16. *unstained*. Cf. V, vii, 106-107 ; *Pericles*, I, i, 53.

18. *do thee right* : take thy part. Often so.

20. *indenture* : contract. For the history of the word see Murray.

23. The chalk cliffs at Dover, visible from the opposite shore. 'Albion' (Latin *albus*, 'white') is an ancient name of Britain. Cf. *Henry V*, III, v, 14 : "In that nook-shotten isle of Albion."

27. *water-walled bulwark*. Cf. *Richard II*, II, i, 43-48. — *still* : always. Often so. Cf. *Coriolanus*, II, i, 262. — *secure* : free from care, untroubled. The original (Latin) meaning. So in IV, i, 130.

34. *more* : greater. Cf. 'a more contempt,' *The Comedy of Errors*, II, ii, 174 ; "The more and less," *Henry IV*, IV, iii, 68.

KING PHILIP. Well then, to work: our cannon shall be bent
Against the brows of this resisting town.

Call for our chiefest men of discipline,
To cull the plots of best advantages: 40

We'll lay before this town our royal bones,
Wade to the market-place in Frenchmen's blood,
But we will make it subject to this boy.

CONSTANCE. Stay for an answer to your embassy,
Lest unadvis'd you stain your swords with blood: 45

My Lord Chatillon may from England bring
That right in peace which here we urge in war,
And then we shall repent each drop of blood
That hot rash haste so indirectly shed.

Enter CHATILLON

KING PHILIP. A wonder, lady! lo, upon thy wish 50
Our messenger Chatillon is arriv'd!

What England says, say briefly, gentle lord;
We coldly pause for thee; Chatillon, speak.

CHATILLON. Then turn your forces from this paltry siege
And stir them up against a mightier task. 55
England, impatient of your just demands,

37. cannon. To avoid the anachronism Pope substituted 'engines.'

39. discipline: military science. So in lines 261, 413.

40. To select the most advantageous places for assault.

43. But we will: if we do not. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, IV, iv, 2-3: "and but I be deceived, Signior Baptista may remember me." See Abbott, § 120.

45. unadvis'd: without due consideration, inconsiderate. As in line 191; V, ii, 132. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii, 118.

49. indirectly: not with a straight course, wrongfully. Cf. 'indirect,' 'indirection,' III, i, 275, 276. Cf. *Henry V*, II, iv, 94.

53. coldly: coolly, calmly. Cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, III, ii, 134.

Hath put himself in arms : the adverse winds,
 Whose leisure I have stay'd, have given him time
 To land his legions all as soon as I ;
 His marches are expedient to this town, 60
 His forces strong, his soldiers confident.
 With him along is come the mother-queen,
 An Ate, stirring him to blood and strife ;
 With her her niece, the Lady Blanch of Spain ;
 With them a bastard of the king's deceas'd, 65
 And all th' unsettled humours of the land,
 Rash, inconsiderate, fiery voluntaries,
 With ladies' faces and fierce dragons' spleens,
 Have sold their fortunes at their native homes,
 Bearing their birthrights proudly on their backs, 70
 To make a hazard of new fortunes here :
 In brief, a braver choice of dauntless spirits
 Than now the English bottoms have waft o'er
 Did never float upon the swelling tide,
 To do offence and scath in Christendom : 75

63. Ate Rowe | Ace Ff.

65. king's F₁ | king F₂F₃F₄.

58. stay'd : stayed for, waited for. Cf. *Richard II*, I, iii, 4.

59. all as soon : quite as soon. Cf. III, iv, 125. See Abbott, § 28.

60. expedient : expeditious. Cf. line 223 ; IV, ii, 268.

63. Ate : the goddess of infatuation. Pronounced ā'tē.

64. niece. Here used vaguely for 'granddaughter.'

65. the king's deceas'd : the deceased king's.

66. humours : men of humour. Cf. 'affliction,' III, iv, 36 ; 'horror,' V, i, 50. The abstract has more point than the concrete.

67. voluntaries : volunteers. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, II, i, 106.

73. bottoms : ships. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, V, i, 60. — waft : wafted. Such forms are common. See Abbott, § 342.

75. scath : harm. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, V, i, 7. Cf. 'unscathed.'

The interruption of their churlish drums
Cuts off more circumstance : they are at hand,

Drum beats

To parley or to fight ; therefore prepare.

KING PHILIP. How much unlook'd for is this expedition.

AUSTRIA. By how much unexpected, by so much 80
We must awake endeavour for defence ;
For courage mounteth with occasion :
Let them be welcome then ; we are prepar'd.

Enter KING JOHN, ELINOR, BLANCH, *the* BASTARD, Lords,
and others

KING JOHN. Peace be to France, if France in peace permit
Our just and lineal entrance to our own ; 85
If not, bleed France, and peace ascend to heaven,
Whiles we, God's wrathful agent, do correct
Their proud contempt that beats His peace to heaven.

KING PHILIP. Peace be to England, if that war return
From France to England, there to live in peace. 90
England we love, and for that England's sake
With burden of our armour here we sweat.

84. Scene II Pope.

77. more circumstance : further details. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, v, 127.

79. expedition : speed. Cf. 'expedient,' line 60.

82. with occasion : when the emergency demands.

85. just and lineal : by hereditary right.

87. correct : punish. Cf. *Henry VIII*, III, ii, 335.

88. Their...beats: the proud contempt of them that beat. 'Their,' retaining its face as the genitive of 'they,' is the antecedent of the relative 'that.' Cf. *All's Well that Ends Well*, III, iv, 27: "her prayers, whom heaven delights to hear." See Abbott, § 218.

89. if that : if. So in III, iii, 48 ; III, iv, 163 ; IV, iii, 59. See Abbott, § 287.

This toil of ours should be a work of thine ;
 But thou from loving England art so far,
 That thou hast under-wrought his lawful king, 95
 Cut off the sequence of posterity,
 Out-faced infant state, and done a rape
 Upon the maiden virtue of the crown.
 Look here upon thy brother Geffrey's face ;
 These eyes, these brows, were moulded out of his ; 100
 This little abstract doth contain that large
 Which died in Geffrey, and the hand of time
 Shall draw this brief into as huge a volume :
 That Geffrey was thy elder brother born,
 And this his son : England was Geffrey's right, 105
 And this is Geffrey's : in the name of God
 How comes it then that thou art call'd a king,
 When living blood doth in these temples beat
 Which owe the crown that thou o'ermasterest ?

KING JOHN. From whom hast thou this great commis-
 sion, France, 110
 To draw my answer from thy articles ?

95 *under-wrought* : undermined. — *his* : *its*. 'Its' was just coming into use in Shakespeare's day. Cf. line 202 ; V, vii, 114. Cf. 'her,' line 25 ; V, vii, 115. In line 56 'England' means the king of England, and hence is masculine ('himself,' line 57). Cf. 'France,' line 110.

96-98. Interrupted the hereditary succession, boldly looked infant majesty out of countenance, and shamefully taken his crown.

99. *thy brother Geffrey's face*. He points to Arthur.

101. *abstract*. Geffrey is a book, of which Arthur is the epitome.

106. *this* : Arthur. As in line 105.

109. *owe* : own. As in line 248 ; IV, i, 123. Often so.

111. *draw* : frame. — *from* : out of. — *articles* : indictment (drawn up in articles). Cf. *Richard II*, IV, i, 243. 'Draw' and 'articles' are legal terms, suggested by the expressions in line 103.

KING PHILIP. From that supernal judge that stirs good thoughts

In any breast of strong authority,

To look into the blots and stains of right :

That judge hath made me guardian to this boy, 115

Under whose warrant I impeach thy wrong,

And by whose help I mean to chastise it.

KING JOHN. Alack, thou dost usurp authority.

KING PHILIP. Excuse ; it is to beat usurping down.

ELINOR. Who is it thou dost call usurper, France ? 120

CONSTANCE. Let me make answer : thy usurping son.

ELINOR. Out, insolent ! thy bastard shall be king,
That thou mayst be a queen, and check the world.

CONSTANCE. My bed was ever to thy son as true
As thine was to thy husband, and this boy 125

Liker in feature to his father Geoffrey

Than thou and John in manners ; being as like

As rain to water, or devil to his dam.

My boy a bastard ! By my soul, I think

His father never was so true begot : 130

It cannot be, and if thou wert his mother.

ELINOR. There 's a good mother, boy, that blots thy father.

CONSTANCE. There 's a good grandam, boy, that would
blot thee.

131, 139. and Ff | an Theobald.

119. *Excuse* : pardon me. The Folios have no stop after 'Excuse,' and the passage may mean : That we do it to beat down usurpation is excuse enough for our action.

123. Perhaps a metaphor taken from chess.

126. *feature* : form, fashion. As in IV, ii, 264. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, i, 167. Shakespeare does not use the word in reference to the parts of the face.

AUSTRIA. Peace!

BASTARD. Hear the crier.

AUSTRIA. What the devil art thou?

BASTARD. One that will play the devil, sir, with you, 135
And a may catch your hide and you alone:
You are the hare of whom the proverb goes,
Whose valour plucks dead lions by the beard;
I'll smoke your skin-coat and I catch you right:
Sirrah, look to 't; i' faith I will, i' faith. 140

BLANCH. O well did he become that lion's robe
That did disrobe the lion of that robe.

BASTARD. It lies as sightly on the back of him
As great Alcides' shows upon an ass:
But, ass, I'll take that burden from your back, 145
Or lay on that shall make your shoulders crack.

AUSTRIA. What cracker is this same that deafs our ears
With this abundance of superfluous breath?
King Philip, determine what we shall do straight.

KING PHILIP. Women and fools, break off your conference.

144. shows Theobald | shoes Ff.

134. crier. A sarcastic reply to Austria's 'Peace.' Courts of justice had criers to proclaim silence.

136. a: he. Cf. I, i, 68, and see note. — hide. What most of all kindles the wrath of Faulconbridge against Austria is that the latter, after having caused the death of King Richard, now wears the lion's hide which had belonged to that prince.

137-138. Malone quotes Erasmus (*Adagia*): "Mortuo leoni et lepores insultant." Steevens quotes *The Spanish Tragedy*: "So hares may pull dead lions by the beard."

144. Alcides' shows: the skin of the Nemean lion worn by Hercules.

147. cracker: boaster. With wordplay on 'crack,' line 146.

149. King Philip. The Folios read 'King Lewis' and give the following speech to Lewis. Theobald made the emendation.

King John, this is the very sum of all ; 151
England and Ireland, Anjou, Touraine, Maine,
In right of Arthur do I claim of thee :
Wilt thou resign them and lay down thy arms ?

KING JOHN. My life as soon : I do defy thee, France : 155
Arthur of Bretagne, yield thee to my hand ;
And out of my dear love I'll give thee more
Than e'er the coward hand of France can win ;
Submit thee, boy.

ELINOR. Come to thy grandam, child.

CONSTANCE. Do, child, go to it grandam, child ; 160
Give grandam kingdom, and it grandam will
Give it a plum, a cherry, and a fig :
There's a good grandam.

ARTHUR. Good my mother, peace !
I would that I were low laid in my grave :
I am not worth this coil that's made for me. 165

ELINOR. His mother shames him so, poor boy, he weeps.

CONSTANCE. Now shame upon you, whe'er she does or no !
His grandam's wrongs, and not his mother's shames
Draws those heaven-moving pearls from his poor eyes,
Which heaven shall take in nature of a fee : 170
Ay, with these crystal beads heaven shall be brib'd
To do him justice, and revenge on you.

156. Bretagne Hanmer | Britaine F1F2 | Britain F3.

160. it : its. Shakespeare has many instances of 'it' used possessively, for 'its,' which was not then an accepted word. In such cases modern editors generally, and justly, print 'its' instead of 'it.' The text, however, should probably pass as an exception to the rule, since, as Lettsom remarks, "Constance here is evidently mimicking the imperfect babble of the nursery."

165. coil : bustle, tumult, fuss. Frequently so.

ELINOR. Thou monstrous slanderer of heaven and earth!

CONSTANCE. Thou monstrous injurer of heaven and earth!

Call not me slanderer; thou and thine usurp 175

The dominations, royalties, and rights

Of this oppressed boy; this is thy eldest son's son,

Infortunate in nothing but in thee:

Thy sins are visited in this poor child;

The canon of the law is laid on him, 180

Being but the second generation

Removed from thy sin-conceiving womb.

KING JOHN. Bedlam, have done.

CONSTANCE. I have but this to say,

That he is not only plagued for her sin,

But God hath made her sin and her the plague 185

On this removed issue, plagued for her

And with her plague; her sin his injury,

Her injury the beadle to her sin,

All punish'd in the person of this child,

And all for her: a plague upon her! 190

178. *infortunate*. This form of the word with the Latin prefix is found also in *2 Henry VI*, IV, ix, 18.

187-189. The Folios read and punctuate thus:

And with her plague her sinne; his iniury

Her iniurie the Beadle to her sinne,

All punish'd . . .

Constance still has in mind the words of the Mosaic law (line 180): "visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." And she means that Arthur not only suffers in consequence of Elinor's crime, or on her account, but is also plagued by her, as the direct agent or instrument of his sufferings.

188. *beadle*: the officer who executes the sentence of the court upon persons condemned. The meaning is that Elinor's sin draws evil upon Arthur, and that her sin is moreover the executioner of that evil.

ELINOR. Thou unadvised scold, I can produce
A will that bars the title of thy son.

CONSTANCE. Ay, who doubts that? a will! a wicked will;
A woman's will; a cank'red grandam's will! 194

KING PHILIP. Peace, lady! pause, or be more temperate:
It ill beseems this presence to cry aim
To these ill-tuned repetitions:
Some trumpet summon hither to the walls
These men of Angiers: let us hear them speak
Whose title they admit, Arthur's or John's. 200

Trumpet sounds. Enter a Citizen upon the walls

CITIZEN. Who is it that hath warn'd us to the walls?

KING PHILIP. 'Tis France, for England.

KING JOHN. England, for itself.

You men of Angiers, and my loving subjects, —

KING PHILIP. You loving men of Angiers, Arthur's
subjects,

Our trumpet call'd you to this gentle parle, — 205

KING JOHN. For our advantage; therefore hear us first.

These flags of France, that are advanced here

Before the eye and prospect of your town,

Have hither march'd to your endamagement.

The cannons have their bowels full of wrath, 210

And ready mounted are they to spit forth

191. *unadvised*: inconsiderate, reckless, rash. So Shakespeare often has 'advised' for 'considerate,' or 'careful.' So 'unadvis'd' in line 45: "Lest unadvis'd you stain your swords with blood."

194. *cank'red*: corrupted. Cf. 'canker,' III, iv, 82; V, ii, 14.

196. *to cry aim*: encourage, instigate. A term in archery. Cf. *Merry Wives of Windsor*, III, ii, 45.

Their iron indignation 'gainst your walls :
 All preparation for a bloody siege
 And merciless proceeding by these French
 Confronts your city's eyes, your winking gates ; 215
 And but for our approach those sleeping stones,
 That as a waist doth girdle you about,
 By the compulsion of their ordinance
 By this time from their fixed beds of lime
 Had been dishabited, and wide havoc made 220
 For bloody power to rush upon your peace.
 But on the sight of us your lawful king,
 Who painfully with much expedient march
 Have brought a countercheck before your gates,
 To save unscratch'd your city's threat'ned cheeks, 225
 Behold, the French amaz'd vouchsafe a parole ;
 And now instead of bullets wrapp'd in fire,
 To make a shaking fever in your walls,
 They shoot but calm words folded up in smoke,
 To make a faithless error in your ears ; 230
 Which trust accordingly, kind citizens,
 And let us in, your king, whose labour'd spirits,
 Forwearied in this action of swift speed,
 Craves harbourage within your city walls.

KING PHILIP. When I have said, make answer to us
 both. 235

Lo, in this right hand, whose protection
 Is most divinely vow'd upon the right
 Of him it holds, stands young Plantagenet,

215. *Confronts* | *Comfort Ff.*

218. *ordinance* : *ordnance*. So in *Henry V*, II, iv, 126.

220. *dishabited* : *dislodged*. The verb is found nowhere else.

Son to the elder brother of this man,
And king o'er him, and all that he enjoys : 240
For this down-trodden equity, we tread
In warlike march these greens before your town,
Being no further enemy to you
Than the constraint of hospitable zeal
In the relief of this oppressed child 245
Religiously provokes. Be pleased then
To pay that duty which you truly owe
To him that owes it, namely, this young prince ;
And then our arms, like to a muzzled bear,
Save in aspect, hath all offence seal'd up : 250
Our cannons' malice vainly shall be spent
Against th' invulnerable clouds of heaven,
And with a blessed and unvex'd retire,
With unhack'd swords, and helmets all unbruish'd,
We will bear home that lusty blood again 255
Which here we came to spout against your town,
And leave your children, wives, and you in peace.
But if you fondly pass our proffer'd offer,
'Tis not the roundure of your old-fac'd walls
Can hide you from our messengers of war, 260
Though all these English and their discipline
Were harbour'd in their rude circumference.
Then tell us, shall your city call us lord,
In that behalf which we have challeng'd it ?

248. *owes* : *owns*. So in line 109, where Pope changed 'owe' to 'own.' 'Owe' in line 247 has the present meaning.

258. *fondly* : foolishly. — *offer*. In earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare 'peace' was substituted to avoid the seeming cacophony.

259. *roundure* : circle, girdle. From the French *rondeur*.

Or shall we give the signal to our rage 265
And stalk in blood to our possession?

CITIZEN. In brief, we are the king of England's subjects:
For him, and in his right, we hold this town.

KING JOHN. Acknowledge then the king, and let me in.

CITIZEN. That can we not; but he that proves the king,
To him will we prove loyal: till that time 271
Have we ramm'd up our gates against the world.

KING JOHN. Doth not the crown of England prove the
king?

And if not that, I bring you witnesses,
Twice fifteen thousand hearts of England's breed, — 275

BASTARD. Bastards, and else.

KING JOHN. To verify our title with their lives.

KING PHILIP. As many and as well-born bloods as
those —

BASTARD. Some bastards too.

KING PHILIP. Stand in his face to contradict his claim. 280

CITIZEN. Till you compound whose right is worthiest,
We for the worthiest hold the right from both.

KING JOHN. Then God forgive the sin of all those souls
That to their everlasting residence,
Before the dew of evening fall, shall fleet 285
In dreadful trial of our kingdom's king.

KING PHILIP. Amen, amen. Mount, chevaliers! to arms!

BASTARD. Saint George, that swing'd the dragon, and
e'er since

Sits on his horse back at mine hostess' door,

288-289. Pictures of Saint George armed and mounted were used for innkeepers' signs. — *swing'd*: whipped. The Folios have 'swindg'd,' which represents a pronunciation still heard in dialect.

Teach us some fence ! [*To AUSTRIA*] Sirrah, were I at home,
At your den, sirrah, with your lioness, 291
I would set an ox-head to your lion's hide,
And make a monster of you.

AUSTRIA. Peace ! no more.

BASTARD. O, tremble : for you hear the lion roar.

KING JOHN. Up higher to the plain, where we 'll set forth
In best appointment all our regiments. 296

BASTARD. Speed then, to take advantage of the field.

KING PHILIP. It shall be so ; and at the other hill
Command the rest to stand. God and our right ! *Exeunt*

*Here after excursions, enter the Herald of France, with
trumpets, to the gates*

FRENCH HERALD. You men of Angiers, open wide your
gates, 300

And let young Arthur, Duke of Bretagne, in,
Who by the hand of France this day hath made
Much work for tears in many an English mother,
Whose sons lie scattered on the bleeding ground :
Many a widow's husband grovelling lies, 305
Coldly embracing the discoloured earth,
And victory with little loss doth play
Upon the dancing banners of the French,
Who are at hand, triumphantly displayed,
To enter conquerors, and to proclaim 310
Arthur of Bretagne England's king and yours.

Enter English Herald, with trumpet

ENGLISH HERALD. Rejoice, you men of Angiers, ring
your bells,

King John, your king and England's, doth approach,
 Commander of this hot malicious day,
 Their armours, that march'd hence so silver-bright, 315
 Hither return all gilt with Frenchmen's blood.
 There stuck no plume in any English crest
 That is removed by a staff of France :
 Our colours do return in those same hands
 That did display them when we first march'd forth ; 320
 And, like a jolly troop of huntsmen, come
 Our lusty English, all with purpled hands,
 Dyed in the dying slaughter of their foes :
 Open your gates, and give the victors way.

CITIZEN. Heralds, from off our towers we might behold,
 From first to last the onset and retire 326
 Of both your armies, whose equality
 By our best eyes cannot be censured :
 Blood hath bought blood, and blows have answer'd blows :
 Strength match'd with strength, and power confronted power :
 Both are alike, and both alike we like : 331
 One must prove greatest. While they weigh so even,
 We hold our town for neither ; yet for both.

Re-enter the two KINGS, with their powers, at several doors

KING JOHN. France, hast thou yet more blood to cast
 away ?

325. CITIZEN Rowe | Hubert Ff (and elsewhere in this scene).

316. gilt. Cf. *Macbeth*, II, ii, 56 : " I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal " (i.e. with blood) ; also II, iii, 117-118 : " Here lay Duncan, His silver skin lac'd with his golden blood."

321-323. After a deer hunt the huntsmen used to stain their hands with the blood of the deer as a trophy.

Say, shall the current of our right run on ? 335
Whose passage, vex'd with thy impediment,
Shall leave his native channel and o'erswell
With course disturb'd even thy confining shores,
Unless thou let his silver water keep
A peaceful progress to the ocean. 340

KING PHILIP. England, thou hast not sav'd one drop of
blood,
In this hot trial, more than we of France ;
Rather, lost more. And by this hand I swear,
That sways the earth this climate overlooks,
Before we will lay down our just-borne arms, 345
We'll put thee down, 'gainst whom these arms we bear,
Or add a royal number to the dead,
Gracing the scroll that tells of this war's loss
With slaughter coupled to the name of kings.

BASTARD. Ha, majesty ! how high thy glory towers, 350
When the rich blood of kings is set on fire !
O, now doth Death line his dead chaps with steel ;
The swords of soldiers are his teeth, his fangs ;
And now he feasts, mousing the flesh of men,
In undetermin'd differences of kings. 355
Why stand these royal fronts amazed thus ?
Cry, havoc ! kings : back to the stained field,

350. *glory*: glorying, vaunting. One meaning of the Latin *gloria*.
A frequent usage. — *towers*: soars. A hawking term.

354. *mousing*: tearing, as a cat tears a mouse. So in Dekker's
Wonderful Year, 1603: "Whilst Troy was swilling sack and sugar,
and mousing fat venison, the mad Greeks made bonfires of their
houses." Some interpret, 'nibbling as a mouse does.'

357. *Cry, havoc!* A signal for indiscriminate massacre, or for
giving no quarter. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, III, i, 273.

You equal potents, fiery kindled spirits !

Then let confusion of one part confirm

The other's peace ; till then, blows, blood, and death ; 360

KING JOHN. Whose party do the townsmen yet admit ?

KING PHILIP. Speak, citizens, for England : who's your
king ?

CITIZEN. The king of England, when we know the king.

KING PHILIP. Know him in us, that here hold up his right.

KING JOHN. In us, that are our own great deputy, 365
And bear possession of our person here,
Lord of our presence, Angiers, and of you.

CITIZEN. A greater power than we denies all this ;
And till it be undoubted, we do lock
Our former scruple in our strong-barr'd gates : 370
Kings of our fear, until our fears resolv'd
Be by some certain king purg'd and depos'd.

BASTARD. By heaven, these scroyles of Angiers flout you,
kings,
And stand securely on their battlements
As in a theatre, whence they gape and point 375
At your industrious scenes and acts of death.
Your royal presences be rul'd by me :

358. equal potents : equally matched powers.

371. Kings of our fear : controlling our fear. Tyrwhitt's conjecture that the reading should be 'King'd of our fears,' i.e. ruled by them, is adopted by many modern editors. — *resolv'd*. Sometimes the word, in Shakespeare, means to 'inform,' 'assure,' or 'satisfy' ; sometimes to 'melt' or 'dissolve.' The latter seems to accord best with the sense of 'purg'd' and 'depos'd.'

373. scroyles : scurvy rogues. From the Old Fr. *escroelles* (M. Latin *scrofella*, 'the scurvy').

376. At the scenes and acts of death which you industriously perform.

Do like the mutines of Jerusalem,
Be friends awhile and both conjointly bend
Your sharpest deeds of malice on this town : 380
By east and west let France and England mount
Their battering cannon charged to the mouths,
Till their soul-fearing clamours have brawl'd down
The flinty ribs of this contemptuous city :
I'd play incessantly upon these jades, 385
Even till unfenced desolation
Leave them as naked as the vulgar air.
That done, dissever your united strengths,
And part your mingled colours once again ;
Turn face to face and bloody point to point ; 390
Then, in a moment, Fortune shall cull forth
Out of one side her happy minion,
To whom in favour she shall give the day,
And kiss him with a glorious victory.
How like you this wild counsel, mighty states ? 395
Smacks it not something of the policy ?

KING JOHN. Now by the sky that hangs above our heads,
I like it well. France, shall we knit our powers

378. *mutines* : mutineers. Cf. *Hamlet*, V, ii, 5-6 : "Methought I lay Worse than the mutines in the bilboes." The allusion is probably to the combination of the civil factions in Jerusalem when the city was threatened by Titus.

383. *soul-fearing* : soul-appalling. Shakespeare often uses the verb 'fear' in the sense of 'making afraid,' or 'scaring.'

392. *minion* : darling, favorite. See Murray.

395. *states* : persons in high position. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, IV, v, 65 : "Hail, all you state of Greece"; *Cymbeline*, III, iv, 39 : "Kings, queens and states."

396. *Smacks . . . policy* : is there not some smack of policy, or of politic shrewdness, in this counsel ?

And lay this Angiers even with the ground ;
Then after fight who shall be king of it ? 400

BASTARD. And if thou hast the mettle of a king,
Being wrong'd as we are by this peevish town,
Turn thou the mouth of thy artillery,
As we will ours, against these saucy walls ;
And when that we have dash'd them to the ground, 405
Why then defy each other, and pell-mell
Make work upon ourselves, for heaven or hell.

KING PHILIP. Let it be so : say, where will you assault ?

KING JOHN. We from the west will send destruction
Into this city's bosom. 410

AUSTRIA. I from the north.

KING PHILIP. Our thunder from the south
Shall rain their drift of bullets on this town.

BASTARD. O prudent discipline ! From north to south :
Austria and France shoot in each other's mouth.
I'll stir them to it : come, away, away ! 415

CITIZEN. Hear us, great kings : vouchsafe awhile to stay,
And I shall show you peace and fair-fac'd league :
Win you this city without stroke or wound ;
Rescue those breathing lives to die in beds,
That here come sacrifices for the field. 420
Persever not, but hear me, mighty kings.

KING JOHN. Speak on with favour, we are bent to hear.

CITIZEN. That daughter there of Spain, the Lady Blanch,
Is niece to England : look upon the years
Of Lewis the Dauphin and that lovely maid. 425
If lusty love should go in quest of beauty,
Where should he find it fairer than in Blanch ?

If zealous love should go in search of virtue,
Where should he find it purer than in Blanch?
If love ambitious sought a match of birth, 430
Whose veins bound richer blood than Lady Blanch?
Such as she is, in beauty, virtue, birth,
Is the young Dauphin every way complete:
If not complete of, say he is not she:
And she again wants nothing, to name want, 435
If want it be not that she is not he:
He is the half part of a blessed man,
Left to be finished by such as she,
And she a fair divided excellence,
Whose fulness of perfection lies in him. 440
O two such silver currents, when they join,
Do glorify the banks that bound them in:
And two such shores, to two such streams made one,
Two such controlling bounds shall you be, kings,
To these two princes, if you marry them: 445
This union shall do more than battery can
To our fast-closed gates: for at this match,
With swifter spleen than powder can enforce,
The mouth of passage shall we fling wide ope,
And give you entrance: but without this match, 450
The sea enraged is not half so deaf,
Lions more confident, mountains and rocks
More free from motion, no, not Death himself

431. **Lady Blanch.** Blanch was daughter to Alphonso IX, King of Castile, and niece to King John by his sister Eleanor (Elinor).

435-436. **she . . . he:** and she, again, wants nothing, but that she is not he; if there be anything wanting in her, and if it be right to speak of want in connection with her.

452-453. **Lions . . . motion.** Lions are not more confident, nor mountains and rocks more free from motion.

In mortal fury half so peremptory,
As we to keep this city.

BASTARD. Here's a stay, 455
That shakes the rotten carcass of old Death
Out of his rags! Here's a large mouth indeed,
That spits forth death and mountains, rocks and seas,
Talks as familiarly of roaring lions
As maids of thirteen do of puppy-dogs! 460
What cannoneer begot this lusty blood?
He speaks plain cannon fire, and smoke and bounce;
He gives the bastinado with his tongue:
Our ears are cudgell'd; not a word of his
But buffets better than a fist of France: 465
Zounds, I was never so bethump'd with words
Since I first call'd my brother's father dad.

ELINOR. Son, list to this conjunction, make this match;
Give with our niece a dowry large enough:
For by this knot thou shalt so surely tie 470
Thy now unsur'd assurance to the crown,
That yon green boy shall have no sun to ripe
The bloom that promiseth a mighty fruit.
I see a yielding in the looks of France;

455. *stay*: obstacle, hindrance. The word suggests something thrown in the way, producing a sudden shock. In earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare Johnson's suggested emendation 'flaw' was adopted. Other suggestions are 'storm,' 'bray,' 'style,' 'sway,' 'slave.'

462. *bounce*: bang. The old word for the report of a gun. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, III, ii, 301-306: "there was a little quiver fellow, and a would manage you his piece thus . . . 'rah, tah, tah,' would a say; 'bounce' would a say; and away again would a go."

463. *gives the bastinado*: beats with a cudgel, *pastes*, gives a basting.

Mark how they whisper, urge them while their souls 475
Are capable of this ambition,
Lest zeal, now melted by the windy breath
Of soft petitions, pity and remorse,
Cool and congeal again to what it was.

CITIZEN. Why answer not the double majesties 480
This friendly treaty of our threat'ned town?

KING PHILIP. Speak England first, that hath been for-
ward first

To speak unto this city: what say you?

KING JOHN. If that the Dauphin there, thy princely son,
Can in this book of beauty read 'I love,' 485
Her dowry shall weigh equal with a queen:
For Anjou, and fair Touraine, Maine, Poitiers,
And all that we upon this side the sea,
Except this city now by us besieg'd,
Find liable to our crown and dignity, 490
Shall gild her bridal bed, and make her rich
In titles, honours, and promotions,
As she in beauty, education, blood,
Holds hand with any princess of the world.

KING PHILIP. What say'st thou, boy? look in the lady's face.

LEWIS. I do, my lord, and in her eye I find 496

A wonder, or a wondrous miracle,
The shadow of myself form'd in her eye,
Which, being but the shadow of your son,
Becomes a sun and makes your son a shadow: 500
I do protest I never lov'd myself
Till now infixed I beheld myself,
Drawn in the flattering table of her eye. *Whispers with BLANCH*

BASTARD. Drawn in the flattering table of her eye!

Hang'd in the frowning wrinkle of her brow! 505

And quarter'd in her heart! he doth espy

Himself love's traitor: this is pity now,

That, hang'd and drawn and quarter'd, there should be
In such a love so vile a lout as he.

BLANCH. My uncle's will in this respect is mine, 510

If he see aught in you that makes him like,

That any thing he sees which moves his liking,

I can with ease translate it to my will;

Or if you will, to speak more properly,

I will enforce it easily to my love. 515

Further I will not flatter you, my lord,

That all I see in you is worthy love,

Than this, that nothing do I see in you,

Though churlish thoughts themselves should be your judge,

That I can find should merit any hate. 520

KING JOHN. What say these young ones? What say
you, my niece?

BLANCH. That she is bound in honour still to do
What you in wisdom still vouchsafe to say.

KING JOHN. Speak then, prince Dauphin: can you love
this lady?

LEWIS. Nay, ask me if I can refrain from love, 525
For I do love her most unfeignedly.

KING JOHN. Then do I give Volquessen, Touraine, Maine,
Poitiers, and Anjou, these five provinces,
With her to thee, and this addition more,
Full thirty thousand marks of English coin: 530
Philip of France, if thou be pleas'd withal,
Command thy son and daughter to join hands.

KING PHILIP. It likes us well; young princes, close
your hands.

AUSTRIA. And your lips too; for I am well assur'd
That I did so when I was first assur'd. 535

KING PHILIP. Now, citizens of Angiers, ope your gates,
Let in that amity which you have made,
For at Saint Mary's chapel presently
The rites of marriage shall be solemniz'd.
Is not the Lady Constance in this troop? 540
I know she is not, for this match made up
Her presence would have interrupted much.
Where is she and her son? tell me, who knows.

LEWIS. She is sad and passionate at your highness' tent.

KING PHILIP. And, by my faith, this league that we have
made 545

Will give her sadness very little cure:
Brother of England, how may we content
This widow lady? In her right we came;
Which we, God knows, have turn'd another way,
To our own vantage.

KING JOHN. We will heal up all, 550
For we'll create young Arthur Duke of Bretagne
And Earl of Richmond; and this rich fair town
We make him lord of. Call the Lady Constance;
Some speedy messenger bid her repair
To our solemnity: I trust we shall, 555

539. rites F₄ | rights F₁F₂F₈.

533. likes: suits, pleases. The old impersonal construction.

535. assur'd: betrothed, affianced. Cf. *The Comedy of Errors*,
III, ii, 146.

544. passionate: perturbed. The word denotes violence of feeling.

If not fill up the measure of her will,
 Yet in some measure satisfy her so
 That we shall stop her exclamation :
 Go we, as well as haste will suffer us,
 To this unlook'd for, unprepared pomp. 560

Exeunt [all but the BASTARD]

BASTARD. Mad world ! mad kings ! mad composition !
 John, to stop Arthur's title in the whole,
 Hath willingly departed with a part ;
 And France, whose armour conscience buckled on,
 Whom zeal and charity brought to the field 565
 As God's own soldier, rounded in the ear
 With that same purpose-changer, that sly devil,
 That broker that still breaks the pate of faith,
 That daily break-vow, he that wins of all,
 Of kings, of beggars, old men, young men, maids, 570
 Who, having no external thing to lose,
 But the word ' maid,' cheats the poor maid of that,
 That smooth-fac'd gentleman, tickling Commodity,
 Commodity, the bias of the world,
 The world, who of itself is peised well, 575
 Made to run even upon even ground,

561. Scene VI Pope.

563. departed : parted. In the Marriage Service "till death us do part" is a popular corruption of "till death us depart."

566. rounded : whispered. The proper form is 'rouned.' Cf. *The Examination of William Thorpe*, 1407 : "And the archbishop called then to him a clerke, and rowned with him : and that clerke went forth, and soone brought in the constable of Saltwood castle, and the archbishop rowned a good while with him."

573. tickling Commodity : flattering Expediency (or Self-interest).

575. peised : balanced, poised. To 'peise' is, properly, to 'weigh.'

Till this advantage, this vile-drawing bias,
This sway of motion, this Commodity,
Makes it take head from all indifferency,
From all direction, purpose, course, intent, 580
And this same bias, this Commodity,
This bawd, this broker, this all-changing word,
Clapp'd on the outward eye of fickle France,
Hath drawn him from his own determin'd aid,
From a resolv'd and honourable war, 585
To a most base and vile-concluded peace.
And why rail I on this Commodity?
But for because he hath not woo'd me yet :
Not that I have the power to clutch my hand,
When his fair angels would salute my palm ; 590
But for my hand, as unattempted yet,
Like a poor beggar, raileth on the rich.
Well, whiles I am a beggar, I will rail
And say there is no sin but to be rich ;
And being rich, my virtue then shall be 595
To say there is no vice but beggary.
Since kings break faith upon commodity,
Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee. *Exit*

579. *indifferency* : impartiality. The world, swayed by interest, is compared to a biased bowl, which is deflected from an impartial course by the load in one side.

583. *eye*. "The aperture on one side which contains the bias or weight that inclines the bowl, in running, from the direct course, was sometimes called the eye." — Staunton.

587-592. I rail at bribery, not because I have the virtue to keep my hand closed when a bribe tempts me to open it, but because I am as yet untempted.

590. *angels*. The 'angel' was a gold coin worth about ten shillings, so called from its bearing an effigy of the Archangel Michael.

ACT III

SCENE I. [*The FRENCH KING'S pavilion*]

Enter CONSTANCE, ARTHUR, and SALISBURY

CONSTANCE. Gone to be married ! gone to swear a peace !
False blood to false blood join'd ! Gone to be friends !
Shall Lewis have Blanch, and Blanch those provinces ?
It is not so ; thou hast misspoke, misheard :
Be well advis'd, tell o'er thy tale again. 5
It cannot be ; thou dost but say 't is so,
I trust I may not trust thee, for thy word
Is but the vain breath of a common man.
Believe me, I do not believe thee, man ;
I have a king's oath to the contrary. 10
Thou shalt be punish'd for thus frightening me,
For I am sick and capable of fears,
Oppress'd with wrongs, and therefore full of fears,
A widow, husbandless, subject to fears,
A woman naturally born to fears ; 15
And though thou now confess thou didst but jest,
With my vex'd spirits I cannot take a truce,
But they will quake and tremble all this day.
What dost thou mean by shaking of thy head ?

ACT III. *Actus Secundus* in the Folios, ending at line 74.

17. take a truce: make peace. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III, i, 162 :
"Could not take truce with the unruly spleen Of Tybalt deaf to
peace."

Why dost thou look so sadly on my son? 20
What means that hand upon that breast of thine?
Why holds thine eye that lamentable rheum,
Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds?
Be these sad signs confirmers of thy words?
Then speak again; not all thy former tale, 25
But this one word, whether thy tale be true.

SALISBURY. As true as I believe you think them false
That give you cause to prove my saying true.

CONSTANCE. O if thou teach me to believe this sorrow,
Teach thou this sorrow how to make me die, 30
And let belief and life encounter so
As doth the fury of two desperate men
Which in the very meeting fall and die.
Lewis marry Blanch! O boy, then where art thou?
France friend with England, what becomes of me? 35
Fellow, be gone! I cannot brook thy sight.
This news hath made thee a most ugly man.

SALISBURY. What other harm have I, good lady, done,
But spoke the harm that is by others done?

CONSTANCE. Which harm within itself so heinous is 40
As it makes harmful all that speak of it.

ARTHUR. I do beseech you, madam, be content.

CONSTANCE. If thou that bid'st me be content wert grim,
Ugly, and sland'rous to thy mother's womb,
Full of unpleasing blots, and sightless stains, 45
Lame, foolish, crooked, swart, prodigious,

22. that lamentable rheum: those tears of sorrow. 'Rheum' is often used of tears. Cf. IV, i, 33; IV, iii, 108.

45. sightless: unsightly, what one cannot bear to see.

46. prodigious: monstrous. Cf. *Richard III*, I, ii, 22.

Patch'd with foul moles, and eye-offending marks,
 I would not care, I then would be content,
 For then I should not love thee, no, nor thou
 Become thy great birth nor deserve a crown. 50
 But thou art fair, and at thy birth, dear boy,
 Nature and Fortune join'd to make thee great :
 Of Nature's gifts thou mayst with lilies boast
 And with the half-blown rose. But Fortune, O,
 She is corrupted, chang'd and won from thee ; 55
 She adulterates hourly with thine uncle John,
 And with her golden hand hath pluck'd on France
 To tread down fair respect of sovereignty,
 And made his majesty the bawd to theirs.
 France is a bawd to Fortune and King John, 60
 That strumpet Fortune, that usurping John !
 Tell me, thou fellow, is not France forsworn ?
 Envenom him with words, or get thee gone,
 And leave those woes alone which I alone
 Am bound to under-bear.

SALISBURY. Pardon me, madam, 65
 I may not go without you to the kings.

CONSTANCE. Thou mayst, thou shalt ; I will not go with
 thee :
 I will instruct my sorrows to be proud ;
 For grief is proud and makes his owner stoop.
 To me and to the state of my great grief 70

69. stoop. In earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare Hanmer's reading 'stout' was adopted. " Distress, while there remains any prospect of relief, is weak and flexible ; but, when no succour remains, is fearless and stubborn : angry alike at those that injure, and at those that do not help ; careless to please . . . fearless to offend when there is nothing further to be dreaded." — Johnson.

Let kings assemble ; for my grief 's so great
That no supporter but the huge firm earth
Can hold it up : here I and sorrows sit ;
Here is my throne, bid kings come bow to it.

[*Seats herself on the ground*]

Enter KING JOHN, KING PHILIP, LEWIS, BLANCH, ELINOR,
the BASTARD, AUSTRIA [*and* Attendants]

KING PHILIP. 'Tis true, fair daughter ; and this blessed
day 75

Ever in France shall be kept festival :
To solemnize this day the glorious sun
Stays in his course and plays the alchemist,
Turning with splendour of his precious eye
The meagre cloddy earth to glittering gold : 80
The yearly course that brings this day about
Shall never see it but a holiday.

CONSTANCE. A wicked day, and not a holy day ! [*Rising*]
What hath this day deserv'd ? what hath it done,
That it in golden letters should be set 85
Among the high tides in the calendar ?
Nay, rather turn this day out of the week,
This day of shame, oppression, perjury.
Or, if it must stand still, let wives with child
Pray that their burdens may not fall this day, 90
Lest that their hopes prodigiously be cross'd :
But on this day let seamen fear no wreck ;

86. *high tides in the calendar*: times set down in the almanac to be specially observed ; days marked for public honour and celebration.

91. *prodigiously be cross'd*: be frustrated by monstrous births.

92. *But*: except. — *wreck*. 'The Folios have 'wrack.'

No bargains break that are not this day made :

This day, all things begun come to ill end,

Yea, faith itself to hollow falsehood change ! 95

KING PHILIP. By heaven, lady, you shall have no cause
To curse the fair proceedings of this day :
Have I not pawn'd to you my majesty ?

CONSTANCE. You have beguil'd me with a counterfeit
Resembling majesty, which, being touch'd and tried, 100
Proves valueless : you are forsworn, forsworn ;
You came in arms to spill mine enemies' blood,
But now in arms you strengthen it with yours :
The grappling vigour and rough frown of war
Is cold in amity and painted peace, 105
And our oppression hath made up this league.
Arm, arm, you heavens, against these perjur'd kings !
A widow cries ; be husband to me, heavens !
Let not the hours of this ungodly day
Wear out the day in peace ; but, ere sunset, 110
Set armed discord 'twixt these perjur'd kings !
Hear me, O, hear me !

AUSTRIA. Lady Constance, peace !

CONSTANCE. War ! war ! no peace ! peace is to me a war.
O Lymoges ! O Austria ! thou dost shame
That bloody spoil : thou slave, thou wretch, thou coward ! 115
Thou little valiant, great in villainy !
Thou ever strong upon the stronger side !
Thou Fortune's champion that dost never fight
But when her humorous ladyship is by
To teach thee safety ! thou art perjured too, 120
And soothest up greatness. What a fool art thou,

A ramping fool, to brag and stamp and swear
Upon my party ! Thou cold-blooded slave,
Hast thou not spoke like thunder on my side,
Been sworn my soldier, bidding me depend 125
Upon thy stars, thy fortune and thy strength,
And dost thou now fall over to my foes ?
Thou wear a lion's hide ! doff it for shame,
And hang a calf's-skin on those recreant limbs.

AUSTRIA. O, that a man should speak those words to
me ! 130

BASTARD. And hang a calf's-skin on those recreant limbs.

AUSTRIA. Thou dar'st not say so, villain, for thy life.

BASTARD. And hang a calf's-skin on those recreant limbs.

KING JOHN. We like not this ; thou dost forget thyself.

Enter PANDULPH

KING PHILIP. Here comes the holy legate of the pope. 135

PANDULPH. Hail, you anointed deputies of heaven !
To thee, King John, my holy errand is.
I Pandulph, of fair Milan cardinal,
And from Pope Innocent the legate here,
Do in his name religiously demand 140
Why thou against the church, our holy mother,
So wilfully dost spurn ; and force perforce
Keep Stephen Langton, chosen archbishop

123. Upon my party : on my side.

127. fall over : revolt. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, I, iii, 93-94.

129. recreant : cowardly. Constance means that Austria is a coward, and that a calf's skin would fit him better than a lion's.

142. 'Force' and 'perforce' were often thus used together, merely to intensify the expression. Cotgrave explains it, "of necessitie, will he nill he, in spite of his teeth."

Of Canterbury, from that holy see?

This, in our foresaid holy father's name, 145
Pope Innocent, I do demand of thee.

KING JOHN. What earthy name to interrogatories
Can task the free breath of a sacred king?

Thou canst not, cardinal, devise a name
So slight, unworthy and ridiculous, 150

To charge me to an answer, as the pope.

Tell him this tale; and from the mouth of England

Add thus much more, that no Italian priest

Shall tithe or toll in our dominions;

But as we, under heaven, are supreme head, 155

So under Him that great supremacy,

Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,

Without the assistance of a mortal hand:

So tell the pope, all reverence set apart

To him and his usurp'd authority. 160

KING PHILIP. Brother of England, you blaspheme in this.

KING JOHN. Though you and all the kings of Christendom
Are led so grossly by this meddling priest,

Dreading the curse that money may buy out;

And by the merit of vile gold, dross, dust, 165

Purchase corrupted pardon of a man,

Who in that sale sells pardon from himself,

Though you and all the rest so grossly led

This juggling witchcraft with revenue cherish,

148. task Theobald | tast F₁F₂ | taste F₃F₄.

147-148. What...king. What earthly power can hold a king responsible? — interrogatories: questions a witness must answer under oath.

159-160. all . . . authority. All reverence to him and his usurp'd authority being cast off.

Yet I alone, alone do me oppose 170

Against the pope and count his friends my foes.

PANDULPH. Then, by the lawful power that I have,
Thou shalt stand curs'd and excommunicate :

And blessed shall he be that doth revolt

From his allegiance to an heretic ; 175

And meritorious shall that hand be call'd,

Canonized and worshipp'd as a saint,

That takes away by any secret course

Thy hateful life.

CONSTANCE. O, lawful let it be

That I have room with Rome to curse awhile ! 180

Good father cardinal, cry thou amen

To my keen curses ; for without my wrong

There is no tongue hath power to curse him right.

PANDULPH. There's law and warrant, lady, for my curse.

CONSTANCE. And for mine too : when law can do no
right, 185

Let it be lawful that law bar no wrong :

Law cannot give my child his kingdom here,

For he that holds his kingdom holds the law ;

Therefore, since law itself is perfect wrong,

How can the law forbid my tongue to curse ? 190

PANDULPH. Philip of France, on peril of a curse,

Let go the hand of that arch-heretic ;

And raise the power of France upon his head,

Unless he do submit himself to Rome.

ELINOR. Look'st thou pale, France? do not let go thy
hand. 195

CONSTANCE. Look to that, devil ; lest that France repent,
And by disjoining hands, hell lose a soul.

AUSTRIA. King Philip, listen to the cardinal.

BASTARD. And hang a calf's-skin on his recreant limbs.

AUSTRIA. Well, ruffian, I must pocket up these wrongs, 200
Because —

BASTARD. Your breeches best may carry them.

KING JOHN. Philip, what say'st thou to the cardinal?

CONSTANCE. What should he say, but as the cardinal?

LEWIS. Bethink you, father; for the difference
Is purchase of a heavy curse from Rome, 205
Or the light loss of England for a friend:
Forego the easier.

BLANCH. That's the curse of Rome.

CONSTANCE. O Lewis, stand fast! the devil tempts thee
here
In likeness of a new untrimmed bride. 209

BLANCH. The Lady Constance speaks not from her faith,
But from her need.

CONSTANCE. O, if thou grant my need,
Which only lives but by the death of faith,
That need must needs infer this principle,
That faith would live again by death of need.
O then, tread down my need, and faith mounts up; 215
Keep my need up, and faith is trodden down!

KING JOHN. The king is mov'd, and answers not to this.

CONSTANCE. O, be remov'd from him, and answer well!

AUSTRIA. Do so, King Philip; hang no more in doubt.

BASTARD. Hang nothing but a calf's-skin, most sweet lout.

KING PHILIP. I am perplex'd, and know not what to say.

PANDULPH. What canst thou say but will perplex thee
more, 222

If thou stand excommunicate and curs'd?

KING PHILIP. Good reverend father, make my person
yours,

And tell me how you would bestow yourself. 225

This royal hand and mine are newly knit,

And the conjunction of our inward souls

Married in league, coupled and link'd together

With all religious strength of sacred vows ;

The latest breath that gave the sound of words 230

Was deep-sworn faith, peace, amity, true love

Between our kingdoms and our royal selves,

And even before this truce, but new before,

No longer than we well could wash our hands

To clap this royal bargain up of peace, 235

Heaven knows, they were besmear'd and overstain'd

With slaughter's pencil, where revenge did paint

The fearful difference of incensed kings :

And shall these hands, so lately purg'd of blood,

So newly join'd in love, so strong in both, 240

Unyoke this seizure and this kind regret ?

Play fast and loose with faith ? so jest with heaven,

Make such unconstant children of ourselves,

As now again to snatch our palm from palm,

Unswear faith sworn, and on the marriage-bed 245

Of smiling peace to march a bloody host,

And make a riot on the gentle brow

Of true sincerity ? O, holy sir,

My reverend father, let it not be so !

Out of your grace, devise, ordain, impose 250

235. clap . . . up : make a hasty agreement by clasping hands.

240. strong in both : strong in deeds of blood and deeds of love.

241. regret : interchange of salutation. Cf. *Richard II*, I, iii, 142.

Some gentle order ; and then we shall be blest.
To do your pleasure and continue friends.

PANDULPH. All form is formless, order orderless,
Save what is opposite to England's love.

Therefore to arms ! be champion of our church, 255
Or let the church, our mother, breathe her curse,
A mother's curse, on her revolting son.

France, thou mayst hold a serpent by the tongue,
A chafed lion by the mortal paw,
A fasting tiger safer by the tooth, 260
Than keep in peace that hand which thou dost hold.

KING PHILIP. I may disjoin my hand, but not my faith.

PANDULPH. So mak'st thou faith an enemy to faith ;
And like a civil war set'st oath to oath,
Thy tongue against thy tongue. O, let thy vow 265
First made to heaven, first be to heaven perform'd,
That is, to be the champion of our church !

What since thou swor'st is sworn against thyself
And may not be performed by thyself,
For that which thou hast sworn to do amiss 270
Is most amiss when it is truly done,

And being not done, where doing tends to ill,
The truth is then most done not doing it :
The better act of purposes mistook

259. *chafed* Theobald Globe Delius | *cased* Ff.

271. *most* Hanmer | not Ff Globe Delius.

258. The venom of serpents was supposed to be in the tongue.

259. *mortal*: deadly, that which kills. Commonly so in Shakespeare.

270-273. *For . . . it*: on the one hand, the wrong which you have sworn to do is most wrong when your oath is truly performed ; on the other hand, when a proposed act tends to ill, the truth is most done by leaving the act undone. A specimen of argument *in conuerso*.

Is to mistake again ; though indirect, 275
 Yet indirection thereby grows direct,
 And falsehood falsehood cures, as fire cools fire
 Within the scorched veins of one new-burn'd.
 It is religion that doth make vows kept ;
 But thou hast sworn against religion, 280
 By what thou swear'st against the thing thou swear'st,
 And mak'st an oath the surety for thy truth
 Against an oath : the truth thou art unsure
 To swear, swears only not to be forsworn ;
 Else what a mockery should it be to swear ! 285
 But thou dost swear only to be forsworn ;
 And most forsworn, to keep what thou dost swear.
 Therefore thy later vows against thy first
 Is in thyself rebellion to thyself ;
 And better conquest never canst thou make 290
 Than arm thy constant and thy nobler parts
 Against these giddy loose suggestions :
 Upon which better part our prayers come in,
 If thou vouchsafe them. But if not, then know

277-278. fire . . . new-burn'd. Shakespeare has several references to the mode of curing a burn by holding the burnt place up to the fire. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, I, ii, 46: "Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning"; *Julius Cæsar*, III, i, 171: "As fire drives out fire, so pity pity."

281-283. By . . . oath: by which act thou swearest against the king thou swearest by; and, by setting an oath against an oath, thou makest that which is the surety for thy truth the proof that thou art untrue. Probably the language here is intentionally obscure. Many attempts have been made to emend the passage.

287. to . . . swear: in keeping that which thou dost swear. An instance of the infinitive used gerundively.

288-289. vows . . . is. See Abbott, § 412: "confusion of proximity."

The peril of our curses light on thee 295
 So heavy as thou shalt not shake them off,
 But in despair die under their black weight.

AUSTRIA. Rebellion, flat rebellion!

BASTARD. Will 't not be?

Will not a calf's-skin stop that mouth of thine?

LEWIS. Father, to arms!

BLANCH. Upon thy wedding-day? 300

Against the blood that thou hast married?

What, shall our feast be kept with slaughter'd men?

Shall braying trumpets and loud churlish drums,

Clamours of hell, be measures to our pomp?

O husband, hear me! ay, alack, how new 305

Is husband in my mouth! even for that name,

Which till this time my tongue did ne'er pronounce,

Upon my knee I beg, go not to arms

Against mine uncle.

CONSTANCE. O, upon my knee,

Made hard with kneeling, I do pray to thee, 310

Thou virtuous Dauphin, alter not the doom

Forethought by heaven!

BLANCH. Now shall I see thy love: what motive may

Be stronger with thee than the name of wife? 314

CONSTANCE. That which upholdeth him that thee upholds,

His honour: O, thine honour, Lewis, thine honour!

300. LEWIS | Daul. (for 'Daulphin,' i.e. Dauphin) Ff.

295. *peril . . . light*. Another instance of false concord (cf. lines 288-289), the verb agreeing with the nearest substantive. See Abbott, § 412, also §§ 333-336.

301. *Against the blood relations of your wife*.

304. *measures . . . pomp*: music to our wedding festivities.

LEWIS. I muse your majesty doth seem so cold,
When such profound respects do pull you on.

PANDULPH. I will denounce a curse upon his head.

KING PHILIP. Thou shalt not need. England, I will fall
from thee. 320

CONSTANCE. O fair return of banish'd majesty!

ELINOR. O foul revolt of French inconstancy!

KING JOHN. France, thou shalt rue this hour within this
hour.

BASTARD. Old Time the clock-setter, that bald sexton Time,
Is it as he will? well then, France shall rue. 325

BLANCH. The sun's o'ercast with blood: fair day, adieu!
Which is the side that I must go withal?

I am with both: each army hath a hand;

And in their rage, I having hold of both,

They whirl asunder and dismember me. 330

Husband, I cannot pray that thou mayst win;

Uncle, I needs must pray that thou mayst lose;

Father, I may not wish the fortune thine;

Grandam, I will not wish thy wishes thrive:

Whoever wins, on that side shall I lose; 335

Assured loss before the match be play'd.

LEWIS. Lady, with me, with me thy fortune lies.

BLANCH. There where my fortune lives, there my life dies.

KING JOHN. Cousin, go draw our puissance together.

[Exit BASTARD]

France, I am burn'd up with inflaming wrath; 340

A rage whose heat hath this condition,

317. muse: wonder. Cf. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I, iii, 64.

318. respects: considerations. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, i, 68: "There's the respect That makes calamity of so long life."

'That nothing can allay, nothing but blood,
The blood, and dearest-valued blood, of France.

KING PHILIP. Thy rage shall burn thee up, and thou
shalt turn

To ashes, ere our blood shall quench that fire : 345
Look to thyself, thou art in jeopardy.

KING JOHN. No more than he that threats. To arms
let 's hie ! *Exeunt*

SCENE II. [*The same. Plains near Angiers*]

*Alarums, excursions. Enter the BASTARD, with
AUSTRIA'S head*

BASTARD. Now, by my life, this day grows wondrous
hot ;
Some airy devil hovers in the sky
And pours down mischief. Austria's head lie there,
While Philip breathes.

Enter KING JOHN, ARTHUR, and HUBERT

KING JOHN. Hubert, keep this boy. Philip, make up : 5
My mother is assailed in our tent,
And ta'en, I fear.

BASTARD. My lord, I rescued her ;
Her highness is in safety, fear you not :
But on, my liege ; for very little pains
Will bring this labour to an happy end. *Exeunt* 10

2. Tempests, it was held, were induced by spirits of the air.

5. Philip. Either the king or Shakespeare has forgotten the Bastard's change of name. Cf. I, i, 161-162. — **make up** : advance. An old military term.

SCENE III. [*The same*]

Alarums, excursions, retreat. Enter KING JOHN, ELINOR, ARTHUR, the BASTARD, HUBERT, and Lords

KING JOHN. [*To ELINOR*] So shall it be: your grace shall stay behind

So strongly guarded. [*To ARTHUR*] Cousin, look not sad: Thy grandam loves thee; and thy uncle will As dear be to thee as thy father was.

ARTHUR. O, this will make my mother die with grief! 5

KING JOHN. [*To the BASTARD*] Cousin, away for England! haste before:

And, ere our coming, see thou shake the bags
Of hoarding abbots; imprisoned angels
Set at liberty: the fat ribs of peace
Must by the hungry now be fed upon: 10
Use our commission in his utmost force.

BASTARD. Bell, book, and candle shall not drive me back,
When gold and silver beck me to come on.
I leave your highness. Grandam, I will pray,
If ever I remember to be holy, 15
For your fair safety; so, I kiss your hand.

8-9. imprisoned . . . liberty. So in the Folios. Some editors arrange thus for the sake of the verse: "set at liberty Imprisoned angels." — angels. A common pun. See note, II, i, 590.

12. Bell . . . candle. An allusion to the old forms used in pronouncing the final curse of excommunication. On such occasions amid the tolling of bells the bishop and clergy went into the church, with a cross borne before them, and with several waxen tapers lighted. The tapers were extinguished to the reading of the words: "the soul of the excommunicate be given over utterly to the power of the fiend, as this candle is now quenched and put out."

ELINOR. Farewell, gentle cousin.

KING JOHN. Coz, farewell. [*Exit BASTARD*]

ELINOR. Come hither, little kinsman ; hark, a word.

KING JOHN. Come hither, Hubert. O my gentle Hubert,
We owe thee much ! within this wall of flesh 20

There is a soul counts thee her creditor

And with advantage means to pay thy love :

And, my good friend, thy voluntary oath

Lives in this bosom, dearly cherished.

Give me thy hand. I had a thing to say, 25

But I will fit it with some better time.

By heaven, Hubert, I am almost asham'd

To say what good respect I have of thee.

HUBERT. I am much bounden to your majesty.

KING JOHN. Good friend, thou hast no cause to say so yet,
But thou shalt have ; and creep time ne'er so slow, 31

Yet it shall come for me to do thee good.

I had a thing to say, but let it go :

The sun is in the heaven, and the proud day,

Attended with the pleasures of the world, 35

Is all too wanton and too full of gawds

To give me audience : if the midnight bell

Did, with his iron tongue and brazen mouth,

Sound on into the drowsy ear of night, —

If this same were a churchyard where we stand, 40

And thou possessed with a thousand wrongs,

26. time Pope | tune Ff.

— ear Dyce Staunton Camb | race Ff

39. on Ff | one Theobald.

Globe Delius.

28. respect : opinion, esteem. Cf. III, i, 58.

39. In earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare Theobald's emendation (see textual note) was adopted.

Or if that surly spirit, melancholy,
Had bak'd thy blood and made it heavy-thick,
Which else runs tickling up and down the veins,
Making that idiot, laughter, keep men's eyes 45
And strain their cheeks to idle merriment,
A passion hateful to my purposes,
Or if that thou couldst see me without eyes,
Hear me without thine ears, and make reply
Without a tongue, using conceit alone, 50
Without eyes, ears, and harmful sound of words ;
Then, in despite of brooded watchful day,
I would into thy bosom pour my thoughts :
But, ah, I will not ! yet I love thee well ;
And, by my troth, I think thou lov'st me well. 55

HUBERT. So well, that what you bid me undertake,
Though that my death were adjunct to my act,
By heaven, I would do it.

KING JOHN. Do not I know thou wouldst ?
Good Hubert, Hubert, Hubert, throw thine eye
On yon young boy : I'll tell thee what, my friend, 60
He is a very serpent in my way ;
And wheresoe'er this foot of mine doth tread,
He lies before me : dost thou understand me ?
Thou art his keeper.

HUBERT. And I'll keep him so,
That he shall not offend your majesty.

50. conceit : imagination. Often so in Elizabethan English.

52. brooded. Day (i.e. the sun) is thought of as looking down on the world with the watchfulness of a brooding parent bird. The word 'brooded' is not part of a verb, but an adjective formed by adding the suffix *-ed* to the noun 'brood.'

KING JOHN.

Death.

65

HUBERT. My lord?

KING JOHN.

A grave.

HUBERT.

He shall not live.

KING JOHN.

Enough.

I could be merry now. Hubert, I love thee ;

Well, I 'll not say what I intend for thee :

Remember. Madam, fare you well :

I 'll send those powers o'er to your majesty.

70

ELINOR. My blessing go with thee !

KING JOHN.

For England, cousin, go :

Hubert shall be your man, attend on you

With all true duty. On toward Calais, ho !

*Exeunt*SCENE IV. [*The same. The FRENCH KING'S tent*]*Enter* KING PHILIP, LEWIS, PANDULPH, *and* Attendants

KING PHILIP. So, by a roaring tempest on the flood,

A whole armado of convicted sail

Is scatter'd and disjoin'd from fellowship.

PANDULPH. Courage and comfort ! all shall yet go well.

KING PHILIP. What can go well, when we have run so ill ?

Are we not beaten ? Is not Angiers lost ?

6

Arthur ta'en prisoner ? divers dear friends slain ?

And bloody England into England gone,

O'erbearing interruption, spite of France ?

1-3. A topical allusion. The Spanish Armada was wrecked by tempest in British waters in 1588.

2. *armado* : armada, armed fleet. — *convicted* : discomfited. Delius read 'connected.' In earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare 'convented' was adopted.

LEWIS. What he hath won, that hath he fortified : 10
So hot a speed with such advice dispos'd,
Such temperate order in so fierce a cause,
Doth want example : who hath read or heard
Of any kindred action like to this ?

KING PHILIP. Well could I bear that England had this
praise, 15
So we could find some pattern of our shame.

Enter CONSTANCE

Look, who comes here ! a grave unto a soul ;
Holding the eternal spirit, against her will,
In the vile prison of afflicted breath.
I prithee, lady, go away with me. 20

CONSTANCE. Lo, now ! now see the issue of your peace.

KING PHILIP. Patience, good lady ! comfort, gentle
Constance !

CONSTANCE. No, I defy all counsel, all redress,
But that which ends all counsel, true redress,
Death, death ; O amiable lovely death ! 25
Thou odoriferous stench ! sound rottenness !
Arise forth from the couch of lasting night,
Thou hate and terror to prosperity,
And I will kiss thy detestable bones
And put my eyeballs in thy vaulty brows 30
And ring these fingers with thy household worms

11. with . . . dispos'd : governed by such consideration. In Elizabethan literature 'advice' often means 'judgment.'

18. her : the spirit's.

19. In the loathsome dungeon of a wretched existence. Cf. *Philippians*, iii, 21 : "Who shall change our vile body."

23. defy : refuse, reject. An old meaning common in Shakespeare.

And stop this gap of breath with fulsome dust
 And be a carrion monster like thyself :
 Come, grin on me, and I will think thou smilest
 And buss thee as thy wife. Misery's love, 35
 O, come to me !

KING PHILIP. O fair affliction, peace !

CONSTANCE. No, no, I will not, having breath to cry :
 O, that my tongue were in the thunder's mouth !
 Then with a passion would I shake the world ;
 And rouse from sleep that fell anatomy 40
 Which cannot hear a lady's feeble voice,
 Which scorns a modern invocation.

PANDULPH. Lady, you utter madness, and not sorrow.

CONSTANCE. Thou art not holy to belie me so ;
 I am not mad : this hair I tear is mine ; 45
 My name is Constance ; I was Geffrey's wife ;
 Young Arthur is my son, and he is lost :
 I am not mad : I would to heaven I were !
 For then, 't is like I should forget myself :
 O, if I could, what grief should I forget ! 50
 Preach some philosophy to make me mad,
 And thou shalt be canonized, cardinal ;
 For being not mad but sensible of grief,
 My reasonable part produces reason
 How I may be deliver'd of these woes, 55
 And teaches me to kill or hang myself :
 If I were mad, I should forget my son,

44. not holy F₄ | holy F₁F₂F₃.

36. affliction : afflicted one. The abstract for the concrete.

40. fell anatomy : dreadful skeleton (Death).

42. modern : ordinary, trite. Cf. *As You Like It*, II, vii, 156.

Or madly think a babe of clouts were he :

I am not mad ; too well, too well I feel

The different plague of each calamity. 60

KING PHILIP. Bind up those tresses. O, what love I note
In the fair multitude of those her hairs !

Where but by chance a silver drop hath fallen,

Even to that drop ten thousand wiry friends

Do glue themselves in sociable grief, 65

Like true, inseparable, faithful loves,

Sticking together in calamity.

CONSTANCE. To England, if you will.

KING PHILIP. Bind up your hairs.

CONSTANCE. Yes, that I will ; and wherefore will I do it ?

I tore them from their bonds and cried aloud 70

' O that these hands could so redeem my son,

As they have given these hairs their liberty ! '

But now I envy at their liberty,

And will again commit them to their bonds,

Because my poor child is a prisoner. 75

And, father cardinal, I have heard you say

That we shall see and know our friends in heaven :

If that be true, I shall see my boy again ;

For since the birth of Cain, the first male child,

To him that did but yesterday suspire, 80

There was not such a gracious creature born.

64. friends Rowe | fiends Ff.

58. babe of clouts : doll, rag-baby. Cf. *Macbeth*, III, iv, 106.

68. To . . . will. Probably Constance's reply to Philip's invitation, " I prithee, lady, go away with me," line 20. Staunton suggests that she " apostrophizes her hair as she madly tears it from its bonds."

81. gracious : graceful, full of beauty and charm. Cf. line 96.

But now will canker sorrow eat my bud
 And chase the native beauty from his cheek
 And he will look as hollow as a ghost,
 As dim and meagre as an ague's fit, 85
 And so he'll die ; and, rising so again,
 When I shall meet him in the court of heaven
 I shall not know him : therefore never, never
 Must I behold my pretty Arthur more.

PANDULPH. You hold too heinous a respect of grief. 90

CONSTANCE. He talks to me that never had a son.

KING PHILIP. You are as fond of grief as of your child.

CONSTANCE. Grief fills the room up of my absent child,
 Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
 Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words, 95
 Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
 Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form ;
 Then, have I reason to be fond of grief ?
 Fare you well : had you such a loss as I,
 I could give better comfort than you do. 100
 I will not keep this form upon my head,
 When there is such disorder in my wit.
 O Lord ! my boy, my Arthur, my fair son !
 My life, my joy, my food, my all the world !
 My widow-comfort, and my sorrows' cure ! *Exit* 105

82. canker sorrow : sorrow, like a cankerworm. See note, II, i, 194.

85. as an ague's fit : as one in an ague fit.

90. Such a perverse and willful cherishing of grief is a heinous wrong. — respect : regard, opinion.

100. I . . . do. "This is a sentiment which great sorrow always dictates. Whoever cannot help himself casts his eyes on others for assistance, and often mistakes their inability for coldness."—Johnson.

101. She disorders her hair again. Cf. lines 68–69.

KING PHILIP. I fear some outrage, and I'll follow her.

Exit

LEWIS. There's nothing in this world can make me joy :
Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale
Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man ;
And bitter shame hath spoil'd the sweet world's taste, 110
That it yields nought but shame and bitterness.

PANDULPH. Before the curing of a strong disease,
Even in the instant of repair and health,
The fit is strongest ; evils that take leave,
On their departure most of all show evil : 115
What have you lost by losing of this day ?

LEWIS. All days of glory, joy and happiness.

PANDULPH. If you had won it, certainly you had.
No, no ; when Fortune means to men most good,
She looks upon them with a threat'ning eye. 120
'T is strange to think how much King John hath lost
In this which he accounts so clearly won :
Are not you griev'd that Arthur is his prisoner ?

LEWIS. As heartily as he is glad he hath him.

PANDULPH. Your mind is all as youthful as your blood.
Now hear me speak with a prophetic spirit ; 126
For even the breath of what I mean to speak
Shall blow each dust, each straw, each little rub,
Out of the path which shall directly lead
Thy foot to England's throne ; and therefore mark. 130
John hath seiz'd Arthur ; and it cannot be

108. Life . . . tale. Cf. *Psalms*, xc, 9 : " For all our days are passed away in thy wrath : we spend our years as a tale that is told."

128. rub : obstacle. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, i, 65 : " ay, there's the rub." The metaphor is from the game of bowls. Cf. note, II, i, 579.

That, whiles warm life plays in that infant's veins,
 The misplac'd John should entertain an hour,
 One minute, nay, one quiet breath of rest.
 A sceptre snatch'd with an unruly hand 135
 Must be as boisterously maintain'd as gain'd;
 And he that stands upon a slippery place
 Makes nice of no vile hold to stay him up :
 That John may stand, then Arthur needs must fall ;
 So be it, for it cannot be but so. 140

LEWIS. But what shall I gain by young Arthur's fall ?

PANDULPH. You, in the right of Lady Blanch your wife,
 May then make all the claim that Arthur did.

LEWIS. And lose it, life and all, as Arthur did.

PANDULPH. How green you are and fresh in this old world !
 John lays you plots ; the times conspire with you ; 146
 For he that steeps his safety in true blood
 Shall find but bloody safety and untrue.
 This act so evilly borne shall cool the hearts
 Of all his people and freeze up their zeal, 150
 That none so small advantage shall step forth
 To check his reign, but they will cherish it ;

149. borne F₁F₂ Delius | born F₃F₄ Globe Camb.

138. **Makes nice** : is scrupulous, sticks at. Often so in Shakespeare. We still say, to 'make no scruple' of doing so and so.

146. **you**. The so-called ethical dative. See Abbott, § 220.

147. **true blood** : blood of the true (i.e. just or rightful) claimant of the crown. Shakespeare has several instances of 'blood' put for 'person.' Cf. *Julius Caesar*, IV, iii, 262 : " I know young bloods look for a time of rest."

149. **evilly borne** : wickedly carried on, carried through wickedly. 'Borne' is often used by Shakespeare in this sense. Cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, II, iii, 229 ; *Macbeth*, III, vi, 3.

No natural exhalation in the sky,
 No scope of nature, no distemper'd day,
 No common wind, no custom'd event, 155
 But they will pluck away his natural cause
 And call them meteors, prodigies and signs,
 Abortives, presages and tongues of heaven,
 Plainly denouncing vengeance upon John.

LEWIS. May be he will not touch young Arthur's life,
 But hold himself safe in his prisonment. 161

154. *scope* Ff | *scape* Pope | *shape* Hanmer.

153. *exhalation*: meteor. This is the meaning of the word in the four passages in Shakespeare where it occurs. Meteors were supposed to be derived from matter drawn up by the sun, as is clearly stated in Person's *Varieties* (1635), "Of Meteors." Cf. the quotations in the note below, line 157.

154. *No scope of nature*: nothing which lies within the limits of nature's power, no natural occurrence. In earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare Pope's emendation was adopted, and 'scape of nature' interpreted as meaning any irregularity in the course of things, or any event which, though natural, is uncommon enough to excite particular notice, such as a 'distemper'd day,' or an 'exhalation in the sky.'—*distemper'd day*: day of disturbed, unsettled weather. For 'distemper'd' applied to feelings, cf. IV, iii, 21.

156. *his*: *its*. Referring to 'event.' The form 'its,' though repeatedly used by Shakespeare, especially in his later plays, had not then the stamp of English currency.

157. *meteors*: supernatural phenomena. Herein lies the difference in Elizabethan English between 'meteor' and 'exhalation.' 'Meteor' always bore a more ominous, or ill-boding, sense. Cf. V, ii, 53; *Henry IV*, V, i, 19-20: "And be no more an exhal'd meteor, A prodigy of fear, and a portent Of broached mischief to the unborn times"; *Romeo and Juliet*, III, v, 12-13: "Yond light is not daylight . . . It is some meteor that the sun exhales."

158. *Abortives*: untimely births. These were thought to portend calamities and disasters.

PANDULPH. O, sir, when he shall hear of your approach,
 If that young Arthur be not gone already,
 Even at that news he dies; and then the hearts
 Of all his people shall revolt from him 165
 And kiss the lips of unacquainted change
 And pick strong matter of revolt and wrath
 Out of the bloody fingers' ends of John.
 Methinks I see this hurly all on foot :
 And, O, what better matter breeds for you 170
 Than I have nam'd ! The bastard Faulconbridge
 Is now in England, ransacking the church,
 Offending charity : if but a dozen French
 Were there in arms, they would be as a call
 To train ten thousand English to their side, 175
 Or as a little snow, tumbled about,
 Anon becomes a mountain. O noble Dauphin,
 Go with me to the king : 't is wonderful
 What may be wrought out of their discontent,
 Now that their souls are topful of offence. 180
 For England go : I will whet on the king.

LEWIS. Strong reasons make strong actions : let us go :
 If you say ay, the king will not say no. *Exeunt*

182. strong actions F₂F₈F₄ | strange actions F₁.

166. unacquainted : unaccustomed. Cf. V, ii, 32.

169. hurly : tumult, commotion. Cf. 2 *Henry IV*, III, i. 25.

174. call. "An allusion to the reed, or pipe, termed a bird-call; or to the practice of bird-catchers, who, in laying their nets, place a caged bird over them, which they term the call-bird or bird-call, to lure the wild birds to the snare." — Staunton.

175. train : draw, attract. From Old Fr. *trainer* (Latin *trahere*).

180. topful of offence : brimful of displeasure.

ACT IV

SCENE I. [*A room in a castle*]

Enter HUBERT and Executioners

HUBERT. Heat me these irons hot; and look thou stand
Within the arras; when I strike my foot
Upon the bosom of the ground, rush forth,
And bind the boy which you shall find with me
Fast to the chair: be heedful: hence, and watch. 5

I EXECUTIONER. I hope your warrant will bear out the
deed.

HUBERT. Uncleanly scruples! fear not you: look to 't.

[*Exeunt* Executioners]

Young lad, come forth; I have to say with you.

Enter ARTHUR

ARTHUR. Good morrow, Hubert.

HUBERT. Good morrow, little prince.

ARTHUR. As little prince, having so great a title 10
To be more prince, as may be. You are sad.

HUBERT. Indeed, I have been merrier.

1. *me*: I pray you. The so-called ethical dative. See note, III, iv, 146.

2. *arras*: hangings of figured tapestry with which rooms were lined. So called from Arras in Picardy. To keep these hangings from being rotted by the damp, they were hung on frames, far enough from the walls to admit of a person's hiding behind them.

ARTHUR.

Mercy on me!

Methinks no body should be sad but I :

Yet, I remember, when I was in France,

Young gentlemen would be as sad as night,

15

Only for wantonness. By my christendom,

So I were out of prison and kept sheep,

I should be as merry as the day is long ;

And so I would be here, but that I doubt

My uncle practises more harm to me :

20

He is afraid of me and I of him :

Is it my fault that I was Geffrey's son ?

No, indeed is 't not ; and I would to heaven

I were your son, so you would love me, Hubert.

24

HUBERT. [*Aside*] If I talk to him, with his innocent prate

He will awake my mercy which lies dead :

Therefore I will be sudden and dispatch.

ARTHUR. Are you sick, Hubert ? you look pale to-day :

In sooth, I would you were a little sick,

That I might sit all night and watch with you :

30

I warrant I love you more than you do me.

HUBERT. [*Aside*] His words do take possession of my
bosom.

Read here, young Arthur.

[*Showing a paper*][*Aside*] How now, foolish rheum !

18. be as Ff | be Pope.

23. is 't F₁F₄ | it's F₂F₃.16. Only for wantonness : out of mere affectation. That melancholy was a fashionable affectation in Shakespeare's day may be inferred from frequent allusions in contemporary literature. Cf. *As You Like It*, IV, i, 10. — christendom : christening, baptism.

19. doubt : fear, suspect. So in V, vi, 44.

20. practises : contrives. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III, v, 211.

33. rheum : tears. See note, III, i, 22.

Turning despiteous torture out o' door!

I must be brief, lest resolution drop 35

Out at mine eyes in tender womanish tears.

Can you not read it? is it not fair writ?

ARTHUR. Too fairly, Hubert, for so foul effect:
Must you with hot irons burn out both mine eyes?

HUBERT. Young boy, I must.

ARTHUR. And will you?

HUBERT. And I will. 40

ARTHUR. Have you the heart? When your head did but
ache,

I knit my handkercher about your brows,

The best I had, a princess wrought it me,

And I did never ask it you again;

And with my hand at midnight held your head, 45

And like the watchful minutes to the hour,

Still and anon cheer'd up the heavy time,

Saying, 'What lack you?' and 'Where lies your grief?'

Or, 'What good love may I perform for you?'

Many a poor man's son would have lien still 50

And ne'er have spoke a loving word to you;

But you at your sick service had a prince.

Nay, you may think my love was crafty love

35. *lest* F₄ | *least* F₁F₂F₃.

34. *dispiteous*: merciless. The Folios spell 'dispitious.'

35. *brief*: quick. Cf. IV, iii, 158.

46. *like the . . . the hour*: as the minutes watch over (or mark) the progress of the hour. The inversion of the words is common in Middle and Elizabethan English.

47. *Still and anon*: continually, ever and again.

52. *sick service*: service done to the sick. An instance of what is often called transferred epithet.

And call it cunning : do, and if you will :

If heaven be pleas'd that you must use me ill, 55

Why then you must. Will you put out mine eyes ?

These eyes that never did nor never shall

So much as frown on you.

HUBERT. I have sworn to do it ;

And with hot irons must I burn them out.

ARTHUR. Ah, none but in this iron age would do it ! 60

The iron of itself, though heat red-hot,

Approaching near these eyes, would drink my tears

And quench his fiery indignation

Even in the matter of mine innocence ;

Nay, after that, consume away in rust, 65

But for containing fire to harm mine eye.

Are you more stubborn-hard than hammer'd iron ?

An if an angel should have come to me

And told me Hubert should put out mine eyes,

I would not have believ'd him, — no tongue but Hubert's.

HUBERT. Come forth. [*Stamps*] 71

[*Re-enter Executioners, with a cord, irons, &c.*]

Do as I bid you do.

ARTHUR. O, save me, Hubert, save me ! my eyes are out

Even with the fierce looks of these bloody men. 74

HUBERT. Give me the iron, I say, and bind him here.

ARTHUR. Alas, what need you be so boisterous-rough ?

I will not struggle, I will stand stone-still.

For heaven sake, Hubert, let me not be bound !

54. and if Ff | an if Theobald.

63. his Capell | this Ff.

54. and if. An old reduplication much used in Shakespeare's time.

61. heat : heated. Cf. 'waft,' II, i, 73. See Abbott, § 342.

Nay, hear me, Hubert, drive these men away,
And I will sit as quiet as a lamb ; 80
I will not stir, nor wince, nor speak a word,
Nor look upon the iron angerly :
Thrust but these men away, and I'll forgive you,
Whatever torment you do put me to.

HUBERT. Go, stand within ; let me alone with him. 85

I EXECUTIONER. I am best pleased to be from such a
deed. [Exeunt Executioners]

ARTHUR. Alas, I then have chid away my friend !
He hath a stern look, but a gentle heart :
Let him come back, that his compassion may
Give life to yours.

HUBERT. Come, boy, prepare yourself 90

ARTHUR. Is there no remedy ?

HUBERT. None, but to lose your eyes.

ARTHUR. O heaven, that there were but a mote in yours,
A grain, a dust, a gnat, a wandering hair,
Any annoyance in that precious sense !
Then feeling what small things are boisterous there, 95
Your vile intent must needs seem horrible.

HUBERT. Is this your promise ? go to, hold your tongue.

ARTHUR. Hubert, the utterance of a brace of tongues
Must needs want pleading for a pair of eyes :
Let me not hold my tongue, let me not, Hubert ; 100
Or, Hubert, if you will, cut out my tongue,
So I may keep mine eyes : O, spare mine eyes,
Though to no use but still to look on you !

81. wince F₂F₃F₄ | winch F₁.

81. wince. The First Folio spelling indicates the old pronunciation.

85. let me alone : leave me to settle things by myself.

Lo, by my troth, the instrument is cold
And would not harm me.

HUBERT. I can heat it, boy. 105

ARTHUR. No, in good sooth; the fire is dead with grief,
Being create for comfort, to be used
In undeserv'd extremes: see else yourself;
There is no malice in this burning coal;
The breath of heaven hath blown his spirit out 110
And strew'd repentant ashes on his head.

HUBERT. But with my breath I can revive it, boy.

ARTHUR. And if you do, you will but make it blush
And glow with shame of your proceedings, Hubert:
Nay, it perchance will sparkle in your eyes; 115
And like a dog that is compell'd to fight,
Snatch at his master that doth tarre him on.
All things that you should use to do me wrong
Deny their office: only you do lack
That mercy which fierce fire and iron extends, 120
Creatures of note for mercy-lacking uses.

HUBERT. Well, see to live; I will not touch thine eye
For all the treasure that thine uncle owes:
Yet am I sworn and I did purpose, boy,
With this same very iron to burn them out. 125

106-108. fire . . . extremes. Johnson paraphrases the passage as follows: "The fire, being created not to hurt, but to comfort, is dead with grief for finding itself used in acts of cruelty, which, being innocent, I have not deserved."

109. in this burning. In earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare Grey's reading 'burning in this' was adopted.

117. tarre: incite, instigate. Cf. *Hamlet*, II, ii, 370: "The nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy"; *Troilus and Cressida*, I, iii, 391-392: "Pride alone Must tarre the mastiffs on."

ARTHUR. O, now you look like Hubert! all this while
You were disguis'd.

HUBERT. Peace; no more. Adieu.
Your uncle must not know but you are dead;
I'll fill these dogged spies with false reports:
And, pretty child, sleep doubtless and secure, 130
That Hubert, for the wealth of all the world,
Will not offend thee.

ARTHUR. O heaven! I thank you, Hubert.

HUBERT. Silence; no more: go closely in with me:
Much danger do I undergo for thee. *Exeunt*

SCENE II. [KING JOHN'S *palace*]

Enter KING JOHN, PEMBROKE, SALISBURY, *and other* Lords

KING JOHN. Here once again we sit, once again crown'd,
And look'd upon, I hope, with cheerful eyes.

PEMBROKE. This 'once again,' but that your highness
pleased,
Was once superfluous: you were crown'd before,
And that high royalty was ne'er pluck'd off, 5
The faiths of men ne'er stained with revolt;
Fresh expectation troubled not the land
With any long'd-for change or better state.

SALISBURY. Therefore, to be possess'd with double pomp,

1. again crown'd F₃F₄ | against crown'd F₁F₂.

130. doubtless: fearless. — secure. See note, II, i, 27.

133. closely: secretly. Frequently so. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, i, 29:
"For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither."

4. once superfluous: once more than enough.

To guard a title that was rich before, 10
To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
To throw a perfume on the violet,
To smooth the ice, or add another hue
Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish, 15
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.

PEMBROKE. But that your royal pleasure must be done,
This act is as an ancient tale new told,
And in the last repeating troublesome,
Being urged at a time unseasonable. 20

SALISBURY. In this the antique and well noted face
Of plain old form is much disfigured ;
And, like a shifted wind unto a sail,
It makes the course of thoughts to fetch about,
Startles and frights consideration, 25
Makes sound opinion sick and truth suspected,
For putting on so new a fashion'd robe.

PEMBROKE. When workmen strive to do better than well,
They do confound their skill in covetousness ;
And oftentimes excusing of a fault 30
Doth make the fault the worse by the excuse,
As patches set upon a little breach
Discredit more in hiding of the fault
Than did the fault before it was so patch'd.

SALISBURY. To this effect, before you were new crown'd,
We breath'd our counsel : but it pleas'd your highness 36

10. guard : ornament with facings, trim (as with lace or fringe).

27. so new a fashion'd robe : a robe of so new a fashion.

29. covetousness : over-eager desire to excel. Bacon, in like sort, distinguishes between the love of 'excelling' and the love of 'excellence,' and ascribes the failures of certain men to the former.

To overbear it, and we are all well pleas'd,
Since all and every part of what we would
Doth make a stand at what your highness will.

KING JOHN. Some reasons of this double coronation 40
I have possess'd you with and think them strong ;
And more, more strong, then lesser is my fear,
I shall indue you with : meantime but ask
What you would have reform'd that is not well,
And well shall you perceive how willingly 45
I will both hear and grant you your requests.

PEMBROKE. Then I, as one that am the tongue of these
To sound the purposes of all their hearts,
Both for myself and them, but, chief of all,
Your safety, for the which myself and them 50
Bend their best studies, heartily request
Th' enfranchisement of Arthur ; whose restraint
Doth move the murmuring lips of discontent
To break into this dangerous argument, —
If what in rest you have in right you hold, 55
Why then your fears, which, as they say, attend
The steps of wrong, should move you to mew up
Your tender kinsman and to choke his days
With barbarous ignorance and deny his youth
The rich advantage of good exercise ? 60
That the time's enemies may not have this
To grace occasions, let it be our suit
That you have bid us ask his liberty ;

42. then. Some editors adopt Tyrwhitt's emendation 'when.'

50. them. Probably a printer's repetition from preceding line.

55. If . . . hold : if you rightly hold what you possess in peace.

61–62. That . . . occasions : that the foes of the established order of things may not have this argument to use when opportunity offers.

Which for our goods we do no further ask
 Than whereupon our weal, on you depending, 65
 Counts it your weal he have his liberty.

Enter HUBERT

KING JOHN. Let it be so : I do commit his youth
 To your direction. Hubert, what news with you ?
[*Taking him apart*]

PEMBROKE. This is the man should do the bloody deed ;
 He show'd his warrant to a friend of mine : 70
 The image of a wicked heinous fault
 Lives in his eye ; that close aspect of his
 Does show the mood of a much troubled breast ;
 And I do fearfully believe 't is done,
 What we so fear'd he had a charge to do. 75

SALISBURY. The colour of the king doth come and go
 Between his purpose and his conscience,
 Like heralds 'twixt two dreadful battles set :
 His passion is so ripe, it needs must break.

73. Does F₄ | Do F₁F₃ | Doe F₂ | Doth Dyce.

72. *close aspect* : look of secrecy, unfathomable expression. Hubert must have looked as if he were hiding a guilty secret.

77. *Between . . . conscience* : between his wicked purpose and his consciousness of right. Hubert gives the king to understand that his order for Arthur's death has been performed. — In Shakespeare's time 'conscience' was used as a dissyllable or trisyllable indifferently, as prosody might require. Here it is properly a trisyllable. The same was the case with 'patience,' and other like words. Similarly the termination *ion* is frequently pronounced as two syllables at the end of a line (cf. 'consideration,' line 25, 'preparation,' line 111). See Abbott, § 479.

78. *battles* : armies drawn up in battle array. Frequently so.

PEMBROKE. And when it breaks, I fear will issue thence
The foul corruption of a sweet child's death. 81

KING JOHN. We cannot hold mortality's strong hand :
Good lords, although my will to give is living,
The suit which you demand is gone and dead :
He tells us Arthur is deceas'd to-night. 85

SALISBURY. Indeed we fear'd his sickness was past cure.

PEMBROKE. Indeed we heard how near his death he was
Before the child himself felt he was sick :
This must be answer'd either here or hence.

KING JOHN. Why do you bend such solemn brows on me ?
Think you I bear the shears of destiny ? 91
Have I commandment on the pulse of life ?

SALISBURY. It is apparent foul play ; and 't is shame
That greatness should so grossly offer it :
So thrive it in your game ! and so, farewell. 95

PEMBROKE. Stay yet, Lord Salisbury ; I 'll go with thee,
And find th' inheritance of this poor child,
His little kingdom of a forced grave.
'That blood which ow'd the breadth of all this isle,
Three foot of it doth hold : bad world the while ! 100
This must not be thus borne : this will break out
To all our sorrows, and ere long I doubt. *Exeunt* [Lords]

85. to-night : last night, the past night. See Abbott, § 190. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, II, v, 18 : " I did dream to-night."

89. answer'd : atoned for. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, III, iii, 33.

93. apparent : evident, manifest, unmistakable.

100. foot : feet. In words denoting measurement of time, space, and quantity the singular form is often used with the plural sense.
—bad world the while : a bad world when such things happen.
Cf. IV, iii, 116.

102. doubt : fear, suspect. So in IV, i, 19.

KING JOHN. They burn in indignation. I repent:
 There is no sure foundation set on blood,
 No certain life achiev'd by others' death.

105

Enter a Messenger

A fearful eye thou hast: where is that blood
 That I have seen inhabit in those cheeks?
 So foul a sky clears not without a storm:
 Pour down thy weather: how goes all in France?

MESSENGER. From France to England. Never such a
 power

110

For any foreign preparation
 Was levied in the body of a land.
 The copy of your speed is learn'd by them;
 For when you should be told they do prepare,
 The tidings comes that they are all arriv'd.

115

KING JOHN. O, where hath our intelligence been drunk?
 Where hath it slept? Where is my mother's care,
 That such an army could be drawn in France,
 And she not hear of it?

MESSENGER. My liege, her ear
 Is stopp'd with dust; the first of April died
 Your noble mother: and, as I hear, my lord,
 The Lady Constance in a frenzy died
 Three days before: but this from rumour's tongue
 I idly heard; if true or false I know not.

120

KING JOHN. Withhold thy speed, dreadful occasion!

125

106. fearful: full of fear. Cf. 'fearfully,' line 74.

109-110. how . . . England. The messenger plays upon 'goes.'
 His answer means 'all in France now goes to England.'

113. copy: example, pattern. Often so.

O, make a league with me, till I have pleas'd
My discontented peers! What! mother dead!
How wildly then walks my estate in France!
Under whose conduct came those powers of France
That thou for truth givest out are landed here? 130

MESSENGER. Under the Dauphin.

KING JOHN. Thou hast made me giddy
With these ill tidings.

Enter the BASTARD and PETER of Pomfret

Now, what says the world
To your proceedings? do not seek to stuff
My head with more ill news, for it is full.

BASTARD. But if you be afeard to hear the worst, 135
Then let the worst unheard fall on your head.

KING JOHN. Bear with me, cousin; for I was amaz'd
Under the tide: but now I breathe again
Aloft the flood, and can give audience
To any tongue, speak it of what it will. 140

BASTARD. How I have sped among the clergymen,
The sums I have collected shall express.
But as I travell'd hither through the land,
I find the people strangely fantasied;
Possess'd with rumours, full of idle dreams, 145
Not knowing what they fear, but full of fear:
And here 's a prophet, that I brought with me
From forth the streets of Pomfret, whom I found
With many hundreds treading on his heels;
To whom he sung, in rude harsh-sounding rhymes, 150
That, ere the next Ascension-day at noon,
Your highness should deliver up your crown.

KING JOHN. Thou idle dreamer, wherefore didst thou so ?

PETER. Foreknowing that the truth will fall out so.

KING JOHN. Hubert, away with him ; imprison him ; 155
And on that day at noon, whereon he says
I shall yield up my crown, let him be hang'd.
Deliver him to safety, and return,
For I must use thee. [*Exit HUBERT with PETER*]

O my gentle cousin,
Hear'st thou the news abroad, who are arriv'd ? 160

BASTARD. The French, my lord ; men's mouths are full
of it :

Besides, I met Lord Bigot and Lord Salisbury,
With eyes as red as new-enkindled fire,
And others more, going to seek the grave
Of Arthur, whom they say is kill'd to-night 165
On your suggestion.

KING JOHN. Gentle kinsman, go,
And thrust thyself into their companies :
I have a way to win their loves again ;
Bring them before me.

BASTARD. I will seek them out.

KING JOHN. Nay, but make haste ; the better foot before.
O, let me have no subject enemies, 171
When adverse foreigners affright my towns
With dreadful pomp of stout invasion !
Be Mercury, set feathers to thy heels,
And fly like thought from them to me again. 175

BASTARD. The spirit of the time shall teach me speed.

Exit

158. *safety* : safe-keeping, custody. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, V, iii, 183.

173. *stout* : bold, proud. Cf. *Henry VI*, III, iv, 19.

KING JOHN. Spoke like a sprightly noble gentleman.
Go after him ; for he perhaps shall need
Some messenger betwixt me and the peers ;
And be thou he.

MESSENGER. With all my heart, my liege. [*Exit*] 180

KING JOHN. My mother dead !

Re-enter HUBERT

HUBERT. My lord, they say five moons were seen to
night ;
Four fixed, and the fifth did whirl about
The other four in wondrous motion.

KING JOHN. Five moons !

HUBERT. Old men and beldams in the streets 185
Do prophesy upon it dangerously :
Young Arthur's death is common in their mouths :
And when they talk of him, they shake their heads
And whisper one another in the ear ;
And he that speaks doth gripe the hearer's wrist, 190
Whilst he that hears makes fearful action,
With wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes.
I saw a smith stand with his hammer, thus,
The whilst his iron did on the anvil cool,
With open mouth swallowing a tailor's news ; 195
Who, with his shears and measure in his hand,
Standing on slippers, which his nimble haste
Had falsely thrust upon contrary feet,
Told of a many thousand warlike French
That were embattailed and rank'd in Kent : 200
Another lean unwash'd artificer
Cuts off his tale and talks of Arthur's death.

KING JOHN. Why seek'st thou to possess me with these fears?

Why urgest thou so oft young Arthur's death?

Thy hand hath murd'red him: I had a mighty cause 205

To wish him dead, but thou hadst none to kill him.

HUBERT. No had, my lord! why, did you not provoke me?

KING JOHN. It is the curse of kings to be attended

By slaves that take their humours for a warrant

To break within the bloody house of life, 210

And on the winking of authority

To understand a law, to know the meaning

Of dangerous majesty, when perchance it frowns

More upon humour than advis'd respect.

HUBERT. Here is your hand and seal for what I did. 215

KING JOHN. O, when the last account 'twixt heaven and earth

Is to be made, then shall this hand and seal

Witness against us to damnation!

How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds

Make deeds ill done! Hadst not thou been by, 220

A fellow by the hand of nature mark'd,

Quoted and sign'd to do a deed of shame,

This murder had not come into my mind:

But taking note of thy abhorr'd aspect,

Finding thee fit for bloody villainy, 225

Apt, liable to be employ'd in danger,

207. No had: had not. A sixteenth century idiom, found in Sir Thomas More, Udall, Lodge, Dekker, and other dramatists. Cf. *Roister Doister*, I, iv, 34: "No is?"; and II, iv, 17: "No did?"

214. advis'd respect: deliberate judgment, consideration.

222. Quoted: noted. Etymologically it means 'specially marked out.'

I faintly broke with thee of Arthur's death ;
And thou, to be endeared to a king,
Made it no conscience to destroy a prince.

HUBERT. My lord, — 230

KING JOHN. Hadst thou but shook thy head or made a
pause

When I spake darkly what I purposed,
Or turn'd an eye of doubt upon my face,
As bid me tell my tale in express words,
Deep shame had struck me dumb, made me break off 235
And those thy fears might have wrought fears in me :
But thou didst understand me by my signs
And didst in signs again parley with sin ;
Yea, without stop, didst let thy heart consent,
And consequently thy rude hand to act 240
The deed, which both our tongues held vile to name.
Out of my sight, and never see me more !
My nobles leave me ; and my state is brav'd,
Even at my gates, with ranks of foreign powers :
Nay, in the body of this fleshly land, 245
This kingdom, this confine of blood and breath,
Hostility and civil tumult reigns
Between my conscience and my cousin's death.

231-248. " There are many touches of nature in this conference of John with Hubert. A man engaged in wickedness would keep the profit to himself, and transfer the guilt to his accomplice. This timidity of guilt is drawn *ab ipsis recessibus*, from the intimate knowledge of mankind ; particularly that line in which he says that to have bid him tell his tale in express words would have struck him dumb : nothing is more certain than that bad men . . . palliate their actions to their own minds by gentle terms, and hide themselves from their own detection in ambiguities and subterfuges." — Johnson.

HUBERT. Arm you against your other enemies,
I'll make a peace between your soul and you. 250
Young Arthur is alive: this hand of mine
Is yet a maiden and an innocent hand,
Not painted with the crimson spots of blood.
Within this bosom never ent'red yet
The dreadful motion of a murderous thought; 255
And you have slander'd nature in my form,
Which, howsoever rude exteriorly,
Is yet the cover of a fairer mind
Than to be butcher of an innocent child.

KING JOHN. Doth Arthur live? O, haste thee to the peers,
Throw this report on their incensed rage, 261
And make them tame to their obedience!
Forgive the comment that my passion made
Upon thy feature; for my rage was blind,
And foul imaginary eyes of blood 265
Presented thee more hideous than thou art.
O, answer not, but to my closet bring
The angry lords with all expedient haste.
I conjure thee but slowly; run more fast. *Exeunt*

SCENE III. [*Before the castle*]

Enter ARTHUR, on the walls

ARTHUR. The wall is high, and yet will I leap down:
Good ground, be pitiful and hurt me not!
There's few or none do know me: if they did,
This ship-boy's semblance hath disguis'd me quite.

265. *imaginary*: imaginative, that which conjures up images.

I am afraid ; and yet I'll venture it. 5
If I get down, and do not break my limbs,
I'll find a thousand shifts to get away :
As good to die and go, as die and stay. [*Leaps down*]
O me ! my uncle's spirit is in these stones : 9
Heaven take my soul, and England keep my bones ! *Dies*

Enter PEMBROKE, SALISBURY, and BIGOT

SALISBURY. Lords, I will meet him at Saint Edmundsbury :
It is our safety, and we must embrace
This gentle offer of the perilous time.

PEMBROKE. Who brought that letter from the cardinal ?

SALISBURY. The Count Melun, a noble lord of France ;
Whose private with me of the Dauphin's love 16
Is much more general than these lines import.

BIGOT. To-morrow morning let us meet him then.

SALISBURY. Or rather then set forward ; for 't will be
Two long days' journey, lords, or ere we meet. 20

Enter the BASTARD

BASTARD. Once more to-day well met, distemper'd lords !
The king by me requests your presence straight.

SALISBURY. The king hath dispossess'd himself of us :
We will not line his thin bestained cloak
With our pure honours, nor attend the foot 25

11. him : the Dauphin. The reference is intentionally mysterious.

16. private. Either 'secret information,' or 'personal conference.'
There is wordplay between 'private' and 'general' in the next line.

20. or ere : before. A common usage. So in V, vi, 44.

21. distemper'd : angry, out of temper. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 310-312 :
"The king, sir, is . . . in his retirement marvellous distemper'd."

That leaves the print of blood where'er it walks.

Return and tell him so: we know the worst.

BASTARD. Whate'er you think, good words, I think, were best.

SALISBURY. Our griefs, and not our manners, reason now.

BASTARD. But there is little reason in your grief; 30
Therefore 't were reason you had manners now.

PEMBROKE. Sir, sir, impatience hath his privilege.

BASTARD. 'T is true, to hurt his master, no man else.

SALISBURY. This is the prison. What is he lies here?

[*Seeing* ARTHUR]

PEMBROKE. O death, made proud with pure and princely
beauty! 35

The earth had not a hole to hide this deed.

SALISBURY. Murder, as hating what himself hath done,
Doth lay it open to urge on revenge.

BIGOT. Or, when he doom'd this beauty to a grave,
Found it too precious-princely for a grave. 40

SALISBURY. Sir Richard, what think you? have you be-
held,

Or have you read or heard? or could you think?

Or do you almost think, although you see,

That you do see? could thought, without this object,

Form such another? This is the very top, 45

The height, the crest, or crest unto the crest,

Of murder's arms: this is the bloodiest shame,

The wildest savagery, the vilest stroke,

33. man F₂F₃F₄ | mans F₁.

41. have you F₃F₄ | you have F₁F₂.

29. griefs: grievances. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, I, iii, 118. — reason: speak, discourse. Cf. *Cymbeline*, IV, ii, 14.

32, 33. his: its. As in II, i, 95, etc. See note, II, i, 160.

That ever wall-eyed wrath or staring rage
Presented to the tears of soft remorse. 50

PEMBROKE. All murders past do stand excus'd in this :
And this, so sole and so unmatchable,
Shall give a holiness, a purity,
To the yet unbegotten sin of times ;
And prove a deadly bloodshed but a jest, 55
Exempl'd by this heinous spectacle.

BASTARD. It is a damned and a bloody work ;
The graceless action of a heavy hand,
If that it be the work of any hand.

SALISBURY. If that it be the work of any hand ! 60
We had a kind of light what would ensue :
It is the shameful work of Hubert's hand ;
The practice and the purpose of the king :
From whose obedience I forbid my soul,
Kneeling before this ruin of sweet life, 65
And breathing to his breathless excellence
The incense of a vow, a holy vow,
Never to taste the pleasures of the world,
Never to be infected with delight,
Nor conversant with ease and idleness, 70
Till I have set a glory to this hand,
By giving it the worship of revenge.

PEMBROKE. }
BIGOT. } Our souls religiously confirm thy words.

49. wall-eyed : with glaring eyes. The word properly describes eyes with a white or pale-gray iris. Cf. Cotgrave : "*Oeil de chevre*, a whall or over-white eye, an eye full of white spots, or whose apple seems divided by a streak of white."

50. remorse : pity, compassion. So in line 110 and elsewhere.

54. times : times to come. Contrasted with 'murders past,' line 51.

Enter HUBERT

HUBERT. Lords, I am hot with haste in seeking you :
Arthur doth live ; the king hath sent for you. 75

SALISBURY. O, he is bold and blushes not at death.
Avaunt, thou hateful villain, get thee gone !

HUBERT. I am no villain.

SALISBURY. Must I rob the law ?

[*Drawing his sword*]

BASTARD. Your sword is bright, sir ; put it up again.

SALISBURY. Not till I sheathe it in a murderer's skin. 80

HUBERT. Stand back, Lord Salisbury, stand back, I say ;
By heaven, I think my sword 's as sharp as yours :
I would not have you, lord, forget yourself,
Nor tempt the danger of my true defence ;
Lest I, by marking of your rage, forget 85
Your worth, your greatness and nobility.

BIGOT. Out, dunghill ! dar'st thou brave a nobleman ?

HUBERT. Not for my life : but yet I dare defend
My innocent life against an emperor.

SALISBURY. Thou art a murderer.

HUBERT. Do not prove me so ;
Yet I am none : whose tongue soe'er speaks false, 91
Not truly speaks ; who speaks not truly, lies.

PEMBROKE. Cut him to pieces.

BASTARD. Keep the peace, I say.

SALISBURY. Stand by, or I shall gall you, Faulconbridge.

BASTARD. Thou wert better gall the devil, Salisbury : 95

84. Nor risk attacking my defense in a just cause.

90. Do not prove me so : do not prove me a murderer by provoking me to kill you.

91. Yet : as yet, up to now. Cf. *The Tempest*, II, ii, 82.

If thou but frown on me, or stir thy foot,
Or teach thy hasty spleen to do me shame,
I'll strike thee dead. Put up thy sword betime;
Or I'll so maul you and your toasting-iron,
That you shall think the devil is come from hell. 100

BIGOT. What wilt thou do, renowned Faulconbridge?
Second a villain and a murderer?

HUBERT. Lord Bigot, I am none.

BIGOT. Who kill'd this prince?

HUBERT. 'Tis not an hour since I left him well:
I honour'd him, I lov'd him, and will weep 105
My date of life out for his sweet life's loss.

SALISBURY. Trust not those cunning waters of his eyes,
For villainy is not without such rheum;
And he, long traded in it, makes it seem
Like rivers of remorse and innocence. 110
Away with me, all you whose souls abhor
The uncleanly savours of a slaughter-house;
For I am stifled with this smell of sin.

BIGOT. Away toward Bury, to the Dauphin there!

PEMBROKE. There tell the king he may inquire us out.

Exeunt Lords 115

BASTARD. Here's a good world! Knew you of this fair
work?

Beyond the infinite and boundless reach
Of mercy, if thou didst this deed of death,
Art thou damn'd, Hubert.

HUBERT. Do but hear me, sir.

BASTARD. Ha! I'll tell thee what; 120

99. toasting-iron. Cf. *Henry V*, II, i, 8-10: "mine iron: it is a simple one; but what though? it will toast cheese."

Thou'rt damn'd as black — nay, nothing is so black ;
Thou art more deep damn'd than Prince Lucifer :
There is not yet so ugly a fiend of hell
As thou shalt be, if thou didst kill this child.

HUBERT. Upon my soul —

BASTARD. If thou didst but consent
To this most cruel act, do but despair ; 126
And if thou want'st a cord, the smallest thread
That ever spider twisted from her womb
Will serve to strangle thee ; a rush will be a beam
To hang thee on ; or wouldst thou drown thyself, 130
Put but a little water in a spoon,
And it shall be as all the ocean,
Enough to stifle such a villain up.
I do suspect thee very grievously.

HUBERT. If I in act, consent, or sin of thought,
Be guilty of the stealing that sweet breath
Which was embounded in this beauteous clay,
Let hell want pains enough to torture me.
I left him well.

BASTARD. Go, bear him in thine arms.
I am amaz'd, methinks, and lose my way
Among the thorns and dangers of this world.
How easy dost thou take all England up!
From forth this morsel of dead royalty,
The life, the right and truth of all this realm

121. damn'd as black. Staunton thinks Shakespeare may here have had in mind the old religious plays of Coventry, wherein the damned souls have their faces blackened; and he quotes from the old accounts: "Item, paid to three white souls, 5s. Item, paid to three black souls, 5s. Item, for making and mending of the black souls' hose, 6d. Paid for blacking of the souls' faces, 6d."

Is fled to heaven ; and England now is left 145
 To tug and scramble and to part by the teeth
 The unowed interest of proud-swelling state.
 Now for the bare-pick'd bone of majesty
 Doth dogged war bristle his angry crest
 And snarleth in the gentle eyes of peace : 150
 Now powers from home and discontents at home
 Meet in one line ; and vast confusion waits,
 As doth a raven on a sick-fall'n beast,
 The imminent decay of wrested pomp.
 Now happy he whose cloak and cincture can 155
 Hold out this tempest. Bear away that child
 And follow me with speed : I'll to the king :
 A thousand businesses are brief in hand,
 And heaven itself doth frown upon the land. [Exeunt]

146. *scamble* Ff | *scramble* Rowe.

155. *cincture* Pope | *center* Ff.

146. *scamble* : scramble for, tussle for, struggle for. Cf. *Henry V*, I, i, 4 ; V, ii, 218. So in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*, I, i, 121-122 :

I cannot tell, but we have scrambled up
 More wealth by far than those that brag of faith.

147. *unowed* : unowned. The 'unowed interest' is the interest not now legally possessed by any one.

152. *vast* : empty, waste. Like the Latin *vastus*. Sometimes it appears to mean 'wasting' or 'devastating,' as in *Henry V*, II, iv, 104-105 : "The poor souls for whom this hungry war Opens his vasty jaws."

155. *cincture* : belt, girdle. Perhaps 'centure' should be the reading here (see textual note).

158. *are brief in hand* : call for immediate dispatch.

ACT V

SCENE I. [KING JOHN's *palace*]

Enter KING JOHN, PANDULPH, *and* Attendants

KING JOHN. Thus have I yielded up into your hand
The circle of my glory. [*Giving the crown*]

PANDULPH. Take again
From this my hand, as holding of the pope
Your sovereign greatness and authority.

KING JOHN. Now keep your holy word: go meet the
French, 5
And from his holiness use all your power
To stop their marches 'fore we are inflam'd.
Our discontented counties do revolt;
Our people quarrel with obedience,
Swearing allegiance and the love of soul 10
To stranger blood, to foreign royalty.
This inundation of mistemp'red humour
Rests by you only to be qualified:
Then pause not; for the present time's so sick,
That present medicine must be minist'red, 15
Or overthrow incurable ensues.

ACT V. SCENE I. | Actus Quartus, Scæna prima Ff.

8. **counties.** Probably refers not to geographical divisions but to the peers, or nobles. 'County' is an old form of 'count.'

12-13. The metaphors are from the mediæval physiology.

PANDULPH. It was my breath that blew this tempest up,
Upon your stubborn usage of the pope;
But since you are a gentle convertite,
My tongue shall hush again this storm of war 20
And make fair weather in your blust'ring land.
On this Ascension-day, remember well,
Upon your oath of service to the pope,
Go I to make the French lay down their arms. *Exit*

KING JOHN. Is this Ascension-day? Did not the prophet
Say that before Ascension-day at noon 26
My crown I should give off? Even so I have:
I did suppose it should be on constraint;
But, heaven be thank'd, it is but voluntary.

Enter the BASTARD

BASTARD. All Kent hath yielded; nothing there holds out
But Dover castle: London hath receiv'd, 31
Like a kind host, the Dauphin and his powers:
Your nobles will not hear you, but are gone
To offer service to your enemy,
And wild amazement hurries up and down 35
The little number of your doubtful friends.

KING JOHN. Would not my lords return to me again,
After they heard young Arthur was alive?

BASTARD. They found him dead and cast into the streets,
An empty casket, where the jewel of life 40
By some damn'd hand was robb'd and ta'en away.

KING JOHN. That villain Hubert told me he did live.

BASTARD. So, on my soul, he did, for aught he knew.

19. *convertite*: a person converted to a religious life.

35. *amazement*: consternation. Cf. II, i, 226, 356; IV, ii, 137.

But wherefore do you droop? why look you sad?
Be great in act, as you have been in thought; 45
Let not the world see fear and sad distrust
Govern the motion of a kingly eye:
Be stirring as the time; be fire with fire;
Threaten the threatener and outface the brow
Of bragging horror: so shall inferior eyes, 50
That borrow their behaviours from the great,
Grow great by your example and put on
The dauntless spirit of resolution.
Away, and glister like the god of war,
When he intendeth to become the field: 55
Show boldness and aspiring confidence.
What, shall they seek the lion in his den,
And fright him there? and make him tremble there?
O, let it not be said: forage, and run
To meet displeasure farther from the doors, 60
And grapple with him ere he come so nigh.

KING JOHN. The legate of the pope hath been with me,
And I have made a happy peace with him;
And he hath promis'd to dismiss the powers
Led by the Dauphin.

BASTARD. O inglorious league! 65
Shall we, upon the footing of our land,
Send fair-play orders and make compromise,
Insinuation, parley and base truce
To arms invasive? shall a beardless boy,

60. displeasure: enmity, hostility. The sense of the passage is 'rush forth to hunt and dare the foe, as a hungry lion does to seek his prey.'

66. upon . . . land: while our feet are on our own soil.

A cock'red silken wanton, brave our fields, 70
And flesh his spirit in a warlike soil,
Mocking the air with colours idly spread,
And find no check? Let us, my liege, to arms :
Perchance the cardinal cannot make your peace ;
Or if he do, let it at least be said 75
They saw we had a purpose of defence.

KING JOHN. Have thou the ordering of this present time.

BASTARD. Away, then, with good courage ! yet, I know,
Our party may well meet a prouder foe. *Exeunt*

SCENE II. [*The DAUPHIN'S camp at St. Edmundsbury*]

*Enter, in arms, LEWIS, SALISBURY, MELUN, PEMBROKE,
BIGOT, and Soldiers*

LEWIS. My Lord Melun, let this be copied out,
And keep it safe for our remembrance :
Return the precedent to these lords again ;
That, having our fair order written down,
Both they and we, perusing o'er these notes, 5
May know wherefore we took the sacrament
And keep our faiths firm and inviolable.

SALISBURY. Upon our sides it never shall be broken.
And, noble Dauphin, albeit we swear
A voluntary zeal and an unurg'd faith 10

70. cock'red silken wanton : pampered, finely tailored milksop.

71. flesh : make fierce. The metaphor is from the old practice of giving hawk or hound a bit of the flesh of the game killed, to whet eagerness in the chase.

3. precedent : original draft of the treaty. Cf. *Richard III*, III, vi, 7 : "Eleven hours I spent to write it over, . . . The precedent was full as long a-doing." The Folios spell 'president.'

To your proceedings ; yet believe me, prince,
 I am not glad that such a sore of time
 Should seek a plaster by contemn'd revolt,
 And heal the inveterate canker of one wound
 By making many. O, it grieves my soul, 15
 That I must draw this metal from my side
 To be a widow-maker ! O, and there
 Where honourable rescue and defence
 Cries out upon the name of Salisbury !
 But such is the infection of the time, 20
 That, for the health and physic of our right,
 We cannot deal but with the very hand
 Of stern injustice and confused wrong.
 And is't not pity, O my grieved friends,
 That we, the sons and children of this isle, 25
 Were born to see so sad an hour as this ;
 Wherein we step after a stranger march
 Upon her gentle bosom, and fill up
 Her enemies' ranks, — I must withdraw and weep
 Upon the spot of this enforced cause, — 30
 To grace the gentry of a land remote,
 And follow unacquainted colours here ?
 What, here ? O nation, that thou couldst remove !
 That Neptune's arms, who clippeth thee about,
 Would bear thee from the knowledge of thyself, 35

14. **canker** : corrosion, corruption. Cf. II, i, 194 ; III, iv, 82.

30. **spot** : stain, blot, disgrace. Salisbury thinks it, as he well may, a foul dishonour thus to side with the invader of his country ; and the conscience of duty, or the sense of right outraged in the person of Arthur, which compels him to do so, naturally wrings him with grief. — **enforced** : which we are forced to join.

34. **clippeth** : encircleth, embraceth. Cf. *Henry IV*, III, i, 44.

And grapple thee unto a pagan shore ;
Where these two Christian armies might combine
The blood of malice in a vein of league,
And not to spend it so unneighbourly !

LEWIS. A noble temper dost thou show in this ; 40
And great affections wrestling in thy bosom
Doth make an earthquake of nobility.
O, what a noble combat hast thou fought
Between compulsion and a brave respect !
Let me wipe off this honourable dew, 45
That silverly doth progress on thy cheeks :
My heart hath melted at a lady's tears,
Being an ordinary inundation ;
But this effusion of such manly drops,
This shower, blown up by tempest of the soul, 50
Startles mine eyes, and makes me more amaz'd
Than had I seen the vaulty top of heaven
Figur'd quite o'er with burning meteors.
Lift up thy brow, renowned Salisbury,
And with a great heart heave away this storm : 55

36. *grapple* Pope | *cripple* Ff.

39. *to spend*. 'To' is here used merely as an intensive prefix. The usage was common, and Shakespeare has it several times.

44. *compulsion*. Referring to the 'enforced cause' mentioned in line 30. Hanmer printed 'compassion' for 'compulsion,' and Capell conjectured that 'compunction' was the word.—*brave*: manly, honourable. A fitting epithet of the national feeling which has struggled so hard for the mastery in Salisbury's breast.—*respect*: consideration, motive, inducement.

46. *silverly*: with a silvery appearance or hue. Keats uses the adjective both in this sense (*Endymion*, I, 541) and in that of 'with a silver sound' (*Hyperion*, II, 128). Mrs. Browning (*A Drama of Exile*) uses it in the former sense.

Commend these waters to those baby eyes
That never saw the giant world enrag'd ;
Nor met with fortune other than at feasts,
Full warm of blood, of mirth, of gossiping.
Come, come ; for thou shalt thrust thy hand as deep 60
Into the purse of rich prosperity
As Lewis himself : so, nobles, shall you all,
That knit your sinews to the strength of mine.
And even there, methinks, an angel spake.

Enter PANDULPH

Look, where the holy legate comes apace, 65
To give us warrant from the hand of heaven,
And on our actions set the name of right
With holy breath.

PANDULPH. Hail, noble prince of France !
The next is this, King John hath reconcil'd
Himself to Rome ; his spirit is come in, 70
That so stood out against the holy church,
The great metropolis and see of Rome :
Therefore thy threatening colours now wind up ;
And tame the savage spirit of wild war,
That, like a lion fostered up at hand, 75

59. warm of Ff | of warm Globe Camb.

60-64. for . . . spake. " Surely the close proximity of 'purse,' 'nobles,' and 'angel,' shows that Shakespeare has here yielded to the fascination of a *jeu de mots*, which he was unable to resist, however unsuitable the occasion might be. The Dauphin, we may suppose, speaks 'aside,' with an accent and gesture which mark his contempt for the mercenary allies whom he intends to get rid of as soon as may be." — Camb. 'Noble,' like 'angel' (see note, II, i, 590), was the name of an English coin.

It may lie gently at the foot of peace,
And be no further harmful than in show.

LEWIS. Your grace shall pardon me, I will not back :
I am too high-born to be propertied,
To be a secondary at control, 80
Or useful serving-man and instrument,
To any sovereign state throughout the world.
Your breath first kindled the dead coal of wars
Between this chastis'd kingdom and myself,
And brought in matter that should feed this fire ; 85
And now 't is far too huge to be blown out
With that same weak wind which enkindled it.
You taught me how to know the face of right,
Acquainted me with interest to this land,
Yea, thrust this enterprise into my heart ; 90
And come ye now to tell me John hath made
His peace with Rome ? What is that peace to me ?
I, by the honour of my marriage-bed,
After young Arthur, claim this land for mine ;
And, now it is half-conquer'd, must I back 95
Because that John hath made his peace with Rome ?
Am I Rome's slave ? What penny hath Rome borne,
What men provided, what munition sent,
To underprop this action ? Is 't not I
That undergo this charge ? who else but I, 100
And such as to my claim are liable,

79. *propertied* : used as a chattel, treated as a piece of property.

88. *to know . . . right* : to recognize my right.

89. Made me aware of my claim on the land.

101. And such as are willing to admit my claim. Cf. II, i, 490 ;
IV, ii, 226.

Sweat in this business and maintain this war?
 Have I not heard these islanders shout out
 'Vive le roi!' as I have bank'd their towns?
 Have I not here the best cards for the game, 105
 To win this easy match play'd for a crown?
 And shall I now give o'er the yielded set?
 No, no, on my soul, it never shall be said.

PANDULPH. You look but on the outside of this work.

LEWIS. Outside or inside, I will not return 110
 Till my attempt so much be glorified
 As to my ample hope was promised
 Before I drew this gallant head of war,
 And cull'd these fiery spirits from the world,
 To outlook conquest and to win renown 115
 Even in the jaws of danger and of death. [*Trumpet sounds*]
 What lusty trumpet thus doth summon us?

Enter the BASTARD [attended]

BASTARD. According to the fair play of the world,
 Let me have audience; I am sent to speak,
 My holy lord of Milan, from the king: 120
 I come, to learn how you have dealt for him;
 And, as you answer, I do know the scope
 And warrant limited unto my tongue.

104. *bank'd*: passed the banks of. This, the most probable meaning, has the support of Murray. The word is formed on the analogy of 'coasted.' In *The Troublesome Raigne* (see Introduction, Sources) the Dauphin is described as sailing up the Thames:

And from the hollow holes of Thamesis
 Eccho apace replied Vive la Roy.

115. *outlook*: outface (cf. V, i, 49), outstare, defy.

PANDULPH. The Dauphin is too wilful-opposite,
And will not temporize with my entreaties; 125
He flatly says he'll not lay down his arms.

BASTARD. By all the blood that ever fury breath'd,
The youth says well. Now hear our English king;
For thus his royalty doth speak in me.
He is prepar'd, and reason too he should: 130
This apish and unmannerly approach,
This harness'd masque and unadvised revel,
This unhair'd sauciness and boyish troops,
The king doth smile at; and is well prepar'd
To whip this dwarfish war, these pigmy arms, 135
From out the circle of his territories.
That hand which had the strength, even at your door,
To cudgel you and make you take the hatch,
To dive like buckets in concealed wells,
To crouch in litter of your stable planks, 140
To lie like pawns lock'd up in chests and trunks,
To hug with swine, to seek sweet safety out
In vaults and prisons, and to thrill and shake
Even at the crying of your nation's crow,
Thinking his voice an armed Englishman: 145

133. unhair'd Theobald | unheard Ff.

135. these | Rowe | this Ff.

125. temporize: yield, come to terms, succumb. The word originally meant 'comply with the exigencies or the interests of the time.'

130. and . . . should: and there is reason too why he should be.

132. harness'd masque: masque in armor. — unadvised: rash, inconsiderate, thoughtless.

133. unhair'd: beardless, boy-faced. Spoken in contempt, of course.

138. To . . . take: leap. With 'hatch' cf. I, i, 171.

144. crying . . . crow. The cock (Latin *gallus*), the bird that crows, is the national bird of France (Latin *Gallia*).

Shall that victorious hand be feebled here,
 That in your chambers gave you chastisement?
 No: know the gallant monarch is in arms.
 And like an eagle o'er his aery towers,
 To souse annoyance that comes near his nest. 150
 And you degenerate, you ingrate revolts,
 You bloody Neroes, ripping up the womb
 Of your dear mother England, blush for shame;
 For your own ladies and pale-visag'd maids
 Like Amazons come tripping after drums, 155
 Their thimbles into armed gauntlets change,
 Their needles to lances, and their gentle hearts
 To fierce and bloody inclination.

LEWIS. There end thy brave, and turn thy face in peace;
 We grant thou canst outscold us: fare thee well; 160
 We hold our time too precious to be spent
 With such a brabblor.

PANDULPH. Give me leave to speak.

BASTARD. No, I will speak.

LEWIS. We will attend to neither.

Strike up the drums; and let the tongue of war
 Plead for our interest and our being here. 165

BASTARD. Indeed, your drums, being beaten, will cry out;
 And so shall you, being beaten: do but start

149. *aery*: brood (of an eagle). Shakespeare never uses it in any other sense. Properly 'aery,' as 'aerie,' means the 'nest of any bird of prey.'—*towers*: soars into position for striking. A term from falconry.

150. *souse*: swoop down on. Another term from falconry.

151. *ingrate revolts*: ungrateful rebels. So in V, iv, 7.

159. *brave*: braving of us, bravado, defiance.

162. *brabblor*: noisy fellow. Rowe read 'babler' (babbler).

An echo with the clamour of thy drum,
And even at hand a drum is ready brac'd
That shall reverberate all as loud as thine ; 170
Sound but another, and another shall
As loud as thine rattle the welkin's ear
And mock the deep-mouth'd thunder : for at hand,
Not trusting to this halting legate here,
Whom he hath used rather for sport than need, 175
Is warlike John ; and in his forehead sits
A bare-ribb'd death, whose office is this day
To feast upon whole thousands of the French.

LEWIS. Strike up our drums, to find this danger out.

BASTARD. And thou shalt find it, Dauphin, do not doubt.

Exeunt 180

SCENE III. [*The field of battle*]

Alarums. Enter KING JOHN and HUBERT

KING JOHN. How goes the day with us ? O, tell me, Hubert.

HUBERT. Badly, I fear. How fares your majesty ?

KING JOHN. This fever, that hath troubled me so long,
Lies heavy on me ; O, my heart is sick !

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER. My lord, your valiant kinsman, Faulconbridge,
Desires your majesty to leave the field 6
And send him word by me which way you go.

KING JOHN. Tell him, toward Swinstead, to the abbey there.

8. Swinstead. This form of the name is found in *The Troublesome Raigne*. It is an error for Swineshead.

MESSENGER. Be of good comfort; for the great supply
 That was expected by the Dauphin here, 10
 Are wreck'd three nights ago on Goodwin Sands.
 This news was brought to Richard but even now:
 The French fight coldly, and retire themselves.

KING JOHN. Ay me! this tyrant fever burns me up,
 And will not let me welcome this good news. 15
 Set on toward Swinstead: to my litter straight;
 Weakness possesseth me, and I am faint. *Exeunt*

SCENE IV. [*Another part of the field*]

Enter SALISBURY, PEMBROKE, and BIGOT

SALISBURY. I did not think the king so stor'd with friends.

PEMBROKE. Up once again; put spirit in the French:
 If they miscarry, we miscarry too.

SALISBURY. That misbegotten devil, Faulconbridge,
 In spite of spite, alone upholds the day. 5

PEMBROKE. They say King John sore sick hath left the
 field.

Enter MELUN, wounded

MELUN. Lead me to the revolts of England here.

SALISBURY. When we were happy we had other names.

PEMBROKE. It is the Count Melun.

SALISBURY. Wounded to death.

9. supply: reënforcement, supply of troops. Hence, as a collective noun, it admits both a singular and a plural verb, 'was expected' and 'are wreck'd.' Cf. V, v, 12-13.

13. retire. Frequently used as a transitive verb.

5. In spite of spite: against all odds.

MELUN. Fly, noble English, you are bought and sold;
Unthread the rude eye of rebellion 11
And welcome home again discarded faith.
Seek out King John and fall before his feet;
For if the French be lords of this loud day,
He means to recompense the pains you take 15
By cutting off your heads: thus hath he sworn
And I with him, and many moe with me,
Upon the altar at Saint Edmundsbury;
Even on that altar where we swore to you
Dear amity and everlasting love. 20

SALISBURY. May this be possible? may this be true?

MELUN. Have I not hideous death within my view,
Retaining but a quantity of life,
Which bleeds away, even as a form of wax
Resolveth from his figure 'gainst the fire? 25
What in the world should make me now deceive,
Since I must lose the use of all deceit?
Why should I then be false, since it is true
That I must die here and live hence by truth?
I say again, if Lewis do win the day, 30
He is forsworn, if e'er those eyes of yours
Behold another day break in the east:

10. *bought and sold*: played false with, betrayed. An old proverbial phrase.

11. *unthread . . . rebellion*. The unthreading of a needle is used as a metaphor for simply undoing what has been done. Many quite unnecessary attempts have been made to emend the passage.

17. *moe*: more. Both 'moe' and 'more' are common in the Folios. The former is used only with the plural.

25. *Resolveth*: melteth. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, ii, 129-130: "O, that this too too solid flesh would melt, Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!"

But even this night, whose black contagious breath
 Already smokes about the burning crest
 Of the old, feeble and day-wearied sun, 35
 Even this ill night, your breathing shall expire,
 Paying the fine of rated treachery
 Even with a treacherous fine of all your lives,
 If Lewis by your assistance win the day.
 Commend me to one Hubert with your king : 40
 The love of him, and this respect besides,
 For that my grandsire was an Englishman,
 Awakes my conscience to confess all this.
 In lieu whereof, I pray you, bear me hence
 From forth the noise and rumour of the field, 45
 Where I may think the remnant of my thoughts
 In peace, and part this body and my soul
 With contemplation and devout desires.

SALISBURY. We do believe thee : and beshrew my soul
 But I do love the favour and the form 50
 Of this most fair occasion, by the which
 We will untread the steps of damned flight,
 And like a bated and retired flood,

37-38. *rated* : appraised at its proper value. "The Dauphin has 'rated' your treachery, and set upon it a 'fine' which your lives must pay." — Johnson. There is an obvious play on the two meanings of the word 'fine,' — 'penalty' and 'end.' The same word-play is found in *Hamlet*, V, i, 113-114 : "Is this the fine of his fines?"

41. *respect* : consideration. Cf. III, i, 318.

44. *In lieu whereof* : in return for which. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, IV, i, 410.

45. *rumour* : loud murmur, roar, confused noise. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, II, iv, 18 : "I heard a bustling rumour, like a fray."

Leaving our rankness and irregular course,
 Stoop low within those bounds we have o'erlook'd 55
 And calmly run on in obedience
 Even to our ocean, to our great King John.
 My arm shall give thee help to bear thee hence;
 For I do see the cruel pangs of death
 Right in thine eye. Away, my friends! New flight; 60
 And happy newness, that intends old right.

Exeunt [leading off MELUN]

SCENE V. [*The French camp*]

Enter LEWIS and his train

LEWIS. The sun of heaven methought was loath to set,
 But stay'd and made the western welkin blush,
 When English measure backward their own ground
 In faint retire. O, bravely came we off,
 When with a volley of our needless shot, 5
 After such bloody toil, we bid good night;
 And wound our tott'ring colours clearly up,
 Last in the field, and almost lords of it!

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER. Where is my prince, the Dauphin?

LEWIS. Here: what news?

MESSENGER. The Count Melun is slain; the English lords
 By his persuasion are again fall'n off, 11

7. tott'ring Ff | tatter'd Pope | tattering Malone Globe.

54. rankness: overflow, exuberance (as of a swollen river).

55. o'erlook'd: overflown, overpassed. Cf. III, i, 23.

7. tott'ring. Either 'waving in the air,' or 'in tatters.'

And your supply, which you have wish'd so long,
Are cast away and sunk on Goodwin Sands.

LEWIS. Ah, foul shrewd news! beshrew thy very heart!
I did not think to be so sad to-night 15
As this hath made me. Who was he that said
King John did fly an hour or two before
The stumbling night did part our weary powers?

MESSENGER. Whoever spoke it, it is true, my lord.

LEWIS. Well; keep good quarter and good care to-night:
The day shall not be up so soon as I, 21
To try the fair adventure of to-morrow. *Exeunt*

SCENE VI. [*An open place in the neighbourhood of
Swinstead Abbey*]

Enter the BASTARD and HUBERT, severally

HUBERT. Who's there? speak, ho! speak quickly, or I
shoot.

BASTARD. A friend. What art thou?

HUBERT. Of the part of England.

BASTARD. Whither dost thou go?

HUBERT. What's that to thee? why may not I demand
Of thine affairs, as well as thou of mine? 5

BASTARD. Hubert, I think?

HUBERT. Thou hast a perfect thought:
I will upon all hazards well believe

14. *shrewd*: sharp, biting, bitter. The original sense is 'cursed,' and 'beshrew' means 'a curse upon.' Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, II, vi, 52.

2. *part*: party, side. In III, i, 123, 'party' is used for 'part.'

6. *perfect*: correct. Cf. *Henry IV*, III, i, 88.

Thou art my friend, that know'st my tongue so well.
Who art thou?

BASTARD. Who thou wilt: and if thou please,
Thou mayst befriend me so much as to think 10
I come one way of the Plantagenets.

HUBERT. Unkind remembrance! thou and eyeless night
Have done me shame: brave soldier, pardon me,
That any accent breaking from thy tongue
Should 'scape the true acquaintance of mine ear. 15

BASTARD. Come, come; sans compliment, what news
abroad?

HUBERT. Why, here walk I in the black brow of night,
To find you out.

BASTARD. Brief, then; and what's the news?

HUBERT. O, my sweet sir, news fitting to the night,
Black, fearful, comfortless and horrible. 20

BASTARD. Show me the very wound of this ill news:
I am no woman, I'll not swoon at it.

HUBERT. The king, I fear, is poison'd by a monk:
I left him almost speechless; and broke out
To acquaint you with this evil, that you might 25
The better arm you to the sudden time,
Than if you had at leisure known of this.

BASTARD. How did he take it? who did taste to him?

HUBERT. A monk, I tell you; a resolved villain,

12. *eyeless* Theobald | *endles* F₁ | *endlesse* F₂F₃.

12. *remembrance*: memory, faculty of remembering. — *eyeless*: blind, dark. So in Markham's *English Arcadia* (1607): "O eyeless night, the portraiture of death." And Shakespeare, in *Lucrece*, has 'sightless night.'

27. *Than . . . this*. Than if this knowledge had been withheld from you till you were more at leisure.

Whose bowels suddenly burst out: the king 30
 Yet speaks and peradventure may recover.

BASTARD. Who didst thou leave to tend his majesty?

HUBERT. Why, know you not? the lords are all come
 back,

And brought Prince Henry in their company;
 At whose request the king hath pardon'd them, 35
 And they are all about his majesty.

BASTARD. Withhold thine indignation, mighty heaven,
 And tempt us not to bear above our power!
 I'll tell thee, Hubert, half my power this night,
 Passing these flats, are taken by the tide; 40
 These Lincoln Washes have devoured them;
 Myself, well mounted, hardly have escap'd.
 Away before: conduct me to the king;
 I doubt he will be dead or ere I come. *Exeunt*

SCENE VII. [*The orchard in Swinstead Abbey*]

Enter PRINCE HENRY, SALISBURY, and BIGOT

PRINCE HENRY. It is too late: the life of all his blood
 Is touch'd corruptibly, and his pure brain,
 Which some suppose the soul's frail dwelling-house,
 Doth by the idle comments that it makes
 Foretell the ending of mortality. 5

Enter PEMBROKE

PEMBROKE. His highness yet doth speak, and holds belief
 That, being brought into the open air,

44. doubt: fear. Cf. IV, i, 19. — or ere. Cf. IV, iii, 20.

It would allay the burning quality
Of that fell poison which assaileth him. 9

PRINCE HENRY. Let him be brought into the orchard here.
Doth he still rage? [Exit BIGOT]

PEMBROKE. He is more patient
Than when you left him; even now he sung.

PRINCE HENRY. O vanity of sickness! fierce extremes
In their continuance will not feel themselves.
Death, having prey'd upon the outward parts, 15
Leaves them invisible, and his siege is now
Against the mind, the which he pricks and wounds
With many legions of strange fantasies,
Which, in their throng and press to that last hold,
Confound themselves. 'Tis strange that death should sing.
I am the cygnet to this pale faint swan, 21
Who chants a doleful hymn to his own death,
And from the organ-pipe of frailty sings
His soul and body to their lasting rest.

SALISBURY. Be of good comfort, prince; for you are born
To set a form upon that indigest 26
Which he hath left so shapeless and so rude.

KING JOHN *is brought in*

KING JOHN. Ay, marry, now my soul hath elbow-room;
It would not out at windows nor at doors.
There is so hot a summer in my bosom, 30
That all my bowels crumble up to dust:

17. mind Rowe | winde F1.

21. cygnet Rowe | Symet Ff.

14. not feel themselves: lose all sense of themselves.

26-27. indigest . . . rude. So in Ovid's description of Chaos:
"Quem dixere Chaos, rudis indigestaque moles."

I am a scribbled form, drawn with a pen
 Upon a parchment, and against this fire
 Do I shrink up.

PRINCE HENRY. How fares your majesty?

KING JOHN. Poison'd, — ill fare — dead, forsook, cast off:
 And none of you will bid the winter come 36
 To thrust his icy fingers in my maw,
 Nor let my kingdom's rivers take their course
 Through my burn'd bosom, nor entreat the north
 To make his bleak winds kiss my parched lips 40
 And comfort me with cold. I do not ask you much,
 I beg cold comfort; and you are so strait
 And so ingrateful, you deny me that.

PRINCE HENRY. O that there were some virtue in my
 tears,
 That might relieve you!

KING JOHN. The salt in them is hot. 45
 Within me is a hell; and there the poison
 Is as a fiend confin'd to tyrannize
 On unreprieveable condemned blood.

Enter the BASTARD

BASTARD. O, I am scalded with my violent motion,
 And spleen of speed to see your majesty! 50

KING JOHN. O cousin, thou art come to set mine eye:
 The tackle of my heart is crack'd and burn'd,
 And all the shrouds wherewith my life should sail
 Are turned to one thread, one little hair:

42. strait: stingy, niggardly. The Folios have 'straight.'

50. spleen: heat, eagerness. Cf. II, i, 448.

51. set mine eye: close my eye after death.

My heart hath one poor string to stay it by, 55
Which holds but till thy news be uttered ;
And then all this thou seest is but a clod
And module of confounded royalty.

BASTARD. The Dauphin is preparing hitherward,
Where heaven He knows how we shall answer him ; 60
For in a night the best part of my power,
As I upon advantage did remove,
Were in the Washes all unwarily
Devoured by the unexpected flood. [*The KING dies*]

SALISBURY. You breathe these dead news in as dead an
ear. 65

My liege ! my lord ! but now a king, now thus.

PRINCE HENRY. Even so must I run on, and even so
stop.

What surety of the world, what hope, what stay,
When this was now a king, and now is clay ?

BASTARD. Art thou gone so ? I do but stay behind 70
To do the office for thee of revenge,
And then my soul shall wait on thee to heaven,
As it on earth hath been thy servant still.
Now, now, you stars that move in your right spheres,
Where be your powers ? show now your mended faiths, 75
And instantly return with me again,
To push destruction and perpetual shame
Out of the weak door of our fainting land.
Straight let us seek, or straight we shall be sought ;
The Dauphin rages at our very heels. 80

58. module : image, representation. Hanmer printed 'model.'

62. upon . . . remove. I moved for the purpose of gaining an
advantage. Cf. II, i, 597.

SALISBURY. It seems you know not, then, so much as we :
 The Cardinal Pandulph is within at rest,
 Who half an hour since came from the Dauphin,
 And brings from him such offers of our peace
 As we with honour and respect may take, 85
 With purpose presently to leave this war.

BASTARD. He will the rather do it when he sees
 Ourselves well sinewed to our defence.

SALISBURY. Nay, 't is in a manner done already ;
 For many carriages he hath dispatch'd 90
 To the sea-side, and put his cause and quarrel
 To the disposing of the cardinal :
 With whom yourself, myself and other lords,
 If you think meet, this afternoon will post
 To consummate this business happily. 95

BASTARD. Let it be so : and you, my noble prince,
 With other princes that may best be spar'd,
 Shall wait upon your father's funeral.

PRINCE HENRY. At Worcester must his body be interr'd :
 For so he will'd it.

BASTARD. Thither shall it then : 100
 And happily may your sweet self put on
 The lineal state and glory of the land !
 To whom, with all submission, on my knee
 I do bequeath my faithful services
 And true subjection everlastingly. 105

SALISBURY. And the like tender of our love we make,
 To rest without a spot for evermore.

99-100. According to Roger of Wendover the dying king said, "To God and St. Wulstan I commend my body and soul." St. Wulstan was Bishop of Worcester, 1062-1096.

PRINCE HENRY. I have a kind soul that would give you
thanks

And knows not how to do it but with tears.

BASTARD. O, let us pay the time but needful woe, 110
Since it hath been beforehand with our griefs.

This England never did, nor never shall,

Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,

But when it first did help to wound itself.

Now these her princes are come home again, 115

Come the three corners of the world in arms,

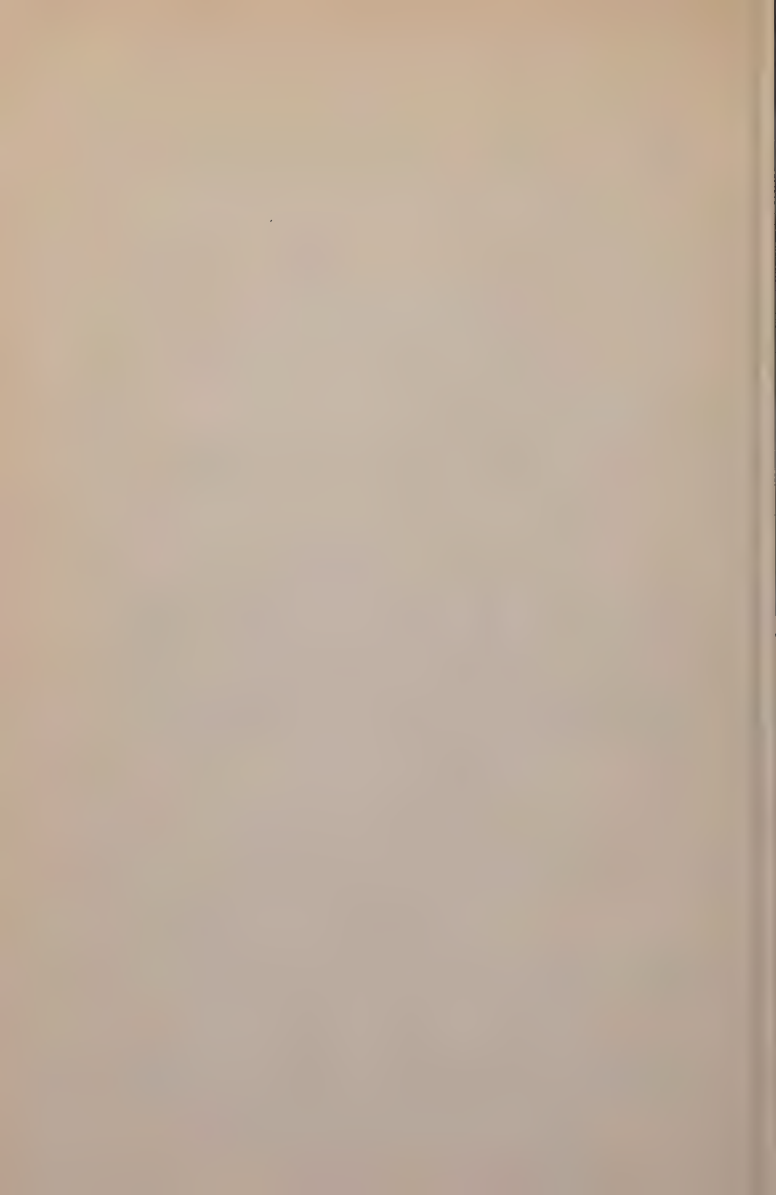
And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,

If England to itself do rest but true. *Exeunt*

108. give you thanks Rowe | give thanks Ff.

111. Since . . . griefs: since the time has prefaced this event with afflictions enough. The speaker thinks they have already suffered so much that now they ought to give way to sorrow as little as may be.

112-118. In the closing lines of *The Troublesome Raigne* is heard the same note of noble patriotism, with an undertone of solemn warning. It is the note that vibrates through all great patriotic literature, from the utterances of the Hebrew prophets to *The Recessional*.



INDEX

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